

ADULT EDUCATION IN NEW ZEALAND

*a critical & historical
survey*

by A. B. THOMPSON

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NEW ZEALAND COUNCIL FOR
EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

1945

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Preface

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THIS book deals with one of the few branches of organized education not already covered in a series of studies sponsored by the New Zealand Council for Educational Research. It was planned before the outbreak of war and, according to the original programme, should have been completed in 1941. The delay, though unavoidable, has in some ways been fortunate; for it has permitted the consideration of several important developments that have taken place during the last three or four years, and has justified a more optimistic view of adult education than would have been possible if the story had had to end in the second year of war.

The term 'adult education' has been broadly interpreted. Mainly because there already exists an admirable study of technical education, I have concentrated on adult education of a non-vocational kind. It will, however, be obvious from the text that I do not regard vocational education as separable from adult education. In making this study of an almost uncharted territory, I have tried to do three main things: to place on record the history of adult education in New Zealand, to provide a critical description of the working of the chief educational agencies and the administrative machinery set up to assist them, and to show what appear to be the main problems awaiting solution at the present

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day. I have not aimed at complete objectivity; for the spirit of a movement is more important than the dry bones of statistics.

The factual material on which Parts One and Two are based has been gathered from many sources, the most important (but by no means all) of which are referred to in the footnotes. During the days of threatened 'enemy action' many of the more valuable sources, including the older newspapers and official documents, were stored away and were not available; some of them are becoming accessible only as the book goes to press. So far as possible I have checked official records by personal observation and interview.

Those who are familiar with *Learn and Live*, that valuable study of adult education in England by Williams and Heath, may regret that I have not attempted a similar 'clinical study' of consumer opinion in New Zealand. To have done so would have made the book unduly long, and would have prevented concentration on what I believe to be the major problems at the present time: the organization and administration that will enable services to reach those for whom they are intended.

A word of explanation is perhaps necessary, too, concerning Chapter XII. The organization set out in that chapter as a possible solution of the present administrative problem does not profess to be more than one person's attempt to arrive at a reasonable plan. I am fully aware that few people will like all of it; some will dislike different parts of it intensely. I believe, however, that, if it does not answer all the questions to everyone's satisfaction, it at least serves to raise some of the questions that will have to be answered in the not very distant future. Those who dislike it are, of course, free to 'find a better 'ole', and I wish them all good fortune in the search.

An adequate list of acknowledgments would fill many pages. I would, however, express my gratitude to the New Zealand Council for Educational Research, not only for the

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financial assistance which made the study possible, but for the complete freedom granted me in planning and undertaking the work, for the patience with which they awaited the final draft of the manuscript, and for their offer to publish the completed report. To attempt to express my appreciation of the assistance I have at all times received from the Director and staff of the Council would be embarrassing both to them and to me. Suffice it to say that working with them has been a very great privilege. I am indebted, too, to many of the adult tutors as well as to officials and administrators of the WEA, the University, the university colleges, and the numerous other agencies concerned with adult education, who readily made material available to me, and who spent many hours in discussions. In particular I would mention the valuable help given by Mr. George Manning, president and for many years secretary of the Workers' Educational Association, who placed at my disposal his very complete files of official records, and by Miss Dorothy Jones (of the WAAE, London), who in the dangerous days of the war trusted me with irreplaceable documents. To the hundreds of adult students who so cheerfully filled in questionnaire blanks, and to the officials of various libraries and Government departments I should also like to express my thanks. I trust that the opinions based on material so willingly supplied by so many people, if not shared by those who have helped me, are at least honest.

I owe a deep debt of gratitude to those very busy people, members of the Council and others, who read the whole or portions of the report in typescript, and offered valuable and often most detailed criticism. Their comments have not only corrected a few factual errors, but have provided a valuable challenge to my judgments, and have forced me to reconsider statements that I had made. If to some of them I shall now appear as an unrepentant sinner, I would assure them that I have not sinned lightly. To go further in acknowledgments would be to trespass on that intimate ground of

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friendship which only the writers of memoirs have the heart to reveal.

Adult education impinges on so many fields that I shall not be surprised to learn that there are omissions in this study. Many people who have played an important part as pioneers of adult education are not even mentioned, not because I do not honour what they have helped to build, but simply because long lists of names are tedious. I should explain, too, that, for fairly obvious reasons, I have deliberately refrained wherever possible from mentioning by name those who have recently become important in adult education.

The book was almost ready for the printer before the Ministerial Conference on Education took place in October, 1944. While it was not possible to deal with the Conference in any detail, I have, for the sake of completeness, taken the opportunity of incorporating certain material presented at the Conference, and of placing on record its findings on adult education.

It remains only to explain that adult education is developing so rapidly, or, to be more exact, is at a stage where, given adequate resources, such rapid development is possible, that some parts of this book may well be out of date in a matter of a very few years. If that should happen (and particularly if the book should carry with it 'the seeds of its own destruction'), I shall be well content.

A. B. THOMPSON

AUCKLAND

February 1945

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To

AILSA AND MARGARET

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ADULT EDUCATION IN NEW ZEALAND

PART ONE: MAINLY HISTORICAL

'October 21, 1841. Fine. Altered our course rather more to southward. Copied Lord Auckland Journal till dinner. In evening talking to emigrants about schools, mechanics' institutions, etc.

November 4, 1841. Opened debate this evening with question: Are the general interests of community benefited by the education of the working classes?'

EXTRACTS FROM A DIARY KEPT ON BOARD
THE BARQUE *Lord Auckland*, LONDON
TO PORT NELSON 1841-2.

'They knew from the beginning just what could be done. There were no mysteries. Civilization went with them into the forest and supported them there.'

'Our grandfathers, and sometimes their fathers before them, passed through the primeval shadow and emerged from it as the founders of a nation with an innate empiricism.'

M. H. HOLCROFT, *The Deepening Stream.*

CHAPTER I

The British Background

* ————— *

THE history of adult education in New Zealand is in large part a chronicle of variations on borrowed themes. But if the themes have at times been borrowed almost to the point of plagiarism, the variations woven about them have, in the course of a century, produced much that is new. Institutions transplanted in a colonial culture do not remain unchanged in their new environment. In the course of time they acquire, almost imperceptibly, a colour at once local and distinctive; they assume new functions, and are altered in the process of fulfilling them. It is with variations on the borrowed and at first sight unconnected institutions of adult education that the present study is largely concerned. But the apparently episodic character of the efforts at adult education in this country is deceptive: because they are successive borrowings from the same parent tradition, they possess a continuity that is real though not immediately obvious. In England, there is a traceable development from the mechanics' institutes, through the co-operative societies and the university extension movement, to the Workers' Educational Association. In New Zealand, on the other hand, there is a gap between the mechanics' institutes of last century and the WEA that is not filled by any recognizable movement; the continuity between them lies in another country. It is as

though a subterranean river, having sent up a tiny spring, continued for a mile or two below ground and then gave rise to a larger surface stream. The two streams might well possess a common quality, not because of their direct continuity, but because of the common source from which they both were drawn.

Adult education may be tentatively defined as 'the deliberate efforts by which men and women attempt to satisfy their thirst for knowledge, to equip themselves for their responsibilities as citizens and members of society, or to find opportunities for self-expression'.¹ In this sense, adult education is as old as the earliest settlements, and events in Britain in the first half of the nineteenth century give the key to the beginning of adult education in New Zealand. The years before 1840 had seen the perilous time of the Napoleonic wars and the depression that came with peace. The social effects of the industrial revolution, already apparent at the end of the eighteenth century, were at last beginning to stir the national conscience. The two nations, so brilliantly described in the novels of the young Disraeli, still stood far apart; but it was becoming clear that repression inspired of anti-Jacobin feeling could no longer prevent consideration of the terrible plight of the unfed, uneducated masses who had flocked to serve the 'dark Satanic mills' of the new towns. Not for much longer could the expression of grievances be treated as sedition. In the strange turmoil of *laissez-faire*, philanthropy, religion, and political necessity, education became a common topic of discussion. Closely following on the beginning of parliamentary reform there were made in England the first payments for purchasing 'an educated democracy on the instalment plan'.² Organized elementary education, still far from adequate, was conducted by the two great educational societies (the 'National' and the 'British and Foreign'). Up to about 1850, adult education

¹ Ministry of Reconstruction, Adult Education Committee, *Final Report*, 34. London 1919.

² Lowndes, G. A. N. *The Silent Social Revolution*, 3. London 1937.

was attempted by those who saw the remedy for the evils of the time in moral and religious instruction of the illiterate poor; by those who (in the words of Birkbeck) sought the 'moral and intellectual amelioration and aggrandisement of the human race'; and yet again by those who felt that 'the submission of the people to misrule and oppression arises from the absence of sound moral and political knowledge amongst the mass of the community'. Thus at least three motives were at work—the religious, the scientific, and the political; and these three motives found expression in the adult schools, the mechanics' institutes, and the work of Lovett and the 'Knowledge' Chartist.

The adult schools which developed during the last decade of the eighteenth century were mainly religious and philanthropic in inspiration. In the West Country and in Nottingham they provided opportunity for some degree of literacy to those men and women who had the courage to sacrifice their few leisure hours in the laborious pursuit of carefully censored learning. By the end of the Napoleonic wars there were adult schools in twenty English towns. The crumbs of culture from the rich man's table were often grudgingly offered, and even then with reservations that must have spoilt their taste to the more active spirits among the poor. Reading could be learned sufficiently well to enable the poor to decipher the words of the Bible, but there were many who dreaded that the 'lower orders' would use their new-found skill to become acquainted with the works of Tom Paine; writing was not always encouraged, lest the masses should give expression to subversive thought. For all her altruism, Hannah More was not above attempting to lead the miners of Somerset 'to see more clearly the advantages [they derived] from the government and constitution of this country, and to observe the benefits flowing from the distinction of rank and fortune which has enabled the rich so liberally to assist the low'.³ Small wonder if such fare and

³ More, Martha. *The Mendip Annals*, quoted in Adult Education Committee Final Report, 11.

the widely circulated *Repository Tracts* tasted ill to empty bellies. In their hey-day, however—and they had passed the peak of their popularity by about 1830—the adult schools performed a valuable service.

The scientific motive in adult education was in the long run far more important. The industrial revolution was introducing workmen to a new world in which mechanical appliances and chemical processes played a large part. The more curious-minded among the workers had even in the eighteenth century made some effort to study the principles involved in their trades, and at least one Mutual Improvement Society for the study of science was formed in 1789. In that year a number of Birmingham working men withdrew from a Sunday Society to form a class for mutual instruction in mechanics, hydrostatics, electricity, pneumatics, and astronomy.⁴ Members of this class delivered lectures before groups in foundries and factories, and one of them, Thomas Clarke, presided over a group that came to be known as the 'Cast Iron Philosophers'. The Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, with Brougham as its first president, was founded in 1827, and for nearly twenty years endeavoured to give effect to utilitarian principles by the publication of cheap popular works. The *Penny Magazine* had a weekly circulation of 120,000 copies, and was only one of the publications inspired by the Society.

The truest expression of the scientific motive, however, was found in the mechanics' institutes, which increased in importance as the adult schools declined. At their best the institutes were the expression of felt needs, and in some instances introduced into adult education the important principle of student representation, giving to working men a large share in control. The mechanics' institutes owe their origin to the work of Dr. George Birkbeck, who in 1799 was appointed Professor of Natural Philosophy and Chemistry in the Andersonian Institute at Glasgow. Birkbeck's

⁴Hodgen, Margaret T. *Workers' Education in England and the U.S.*, 61. London 1925.

predecessor, Dr. John Anderson, 'had been in the habit of giving lectures upon experimental physics, which were attended, among others, by a certain number of workmen'.⁵ This work was extended by Birkbeck who had been touched by the keenness displayed by the men in the workshops to understand the purpose of the apparatus they were making to illustrate his lectures. He accordingly threw his lectures open to 'mechanics'. The second lecture was attended by 200, the third by 300, and the fourth by 500. 'For three successive seasons,' Birkbeck said, 'I had the gratification of lecturing to 500 mechanics. An audience more orderly, attentive and apparently comprehending I never witnessed.'⁶ The removal of Birkbeck to London in 1804 did not mean the end of this pioneering venture. The members of the class continued to attend lectures by Dr. Ure until 1823, when seceders from Ure's courses combined with other Glasgow workmen to organize a Mechanics' Institution. Meanwhile, in other parts of Scotland the urge for the education of mechanics had been felt, and the Edinburgh School of Art had been founded partly to satisfy the need.

In the same year, 1823, a mass meeting of some two thousand 'journeymen, masters, politicians, and philanthropists', held in the *Crown and Anchor* public house in London, took steps to found the London Mechanics' Institution. Birkbeck delivered the inaugural lecture in the following year. In 1824, too, a Mechanics' Institute was set up in Manchester, and thereafter the movement spread through most of the industrial towns. Within two years of the founding of the London Institute there were fifty such societies in the British Isles.

Manchester and Liverpool erected huge fabrics replete with every requirement of luxury and learning. The Wellingborough Institute was established in a workhouse. The villagers of Ripley, in the West Riding, met in a hayloft. Everywhere, under all circumstances, the same enthusiasm prevailed. In 1850 there were 610

⁵ Adult Education Committee, 13.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 14.

Institutes in England, and 12 in Wales, with a total membership of over 600,000.⁷

It was estimated⁸ that in 1850 over 3000 lectures were delivered, and that the number of students attending classes exceeded 16,000.

What did the mechanics' institutes offer, to achieve this great popularity? The original intention of the founders was summed up in a passage from the prospectus of the Manchester Mechanics' Institute :

This society has been founded for the purpose of enabling mechanics and artisans, of whatever trade they may be, to become acquainted with such branches of science as are of practical application in the exercise of that trade, that they may possess a more thorough knowledge of their business, acquire a greater skill in the practice of it, and be qualified to make improvements and even new inventions in the arts which they respectively profess. It is not intended to teach the trade of the machine-maker, the dyer, the carpenter, the mason, or any other practical business; but there is no art which does not depend more or less on scientific principles, and to search out what these are, and to point out their practical application, will form the chief objects of this institution.⁹

Those familiar with technical education in England will recognize in these aims one of the main purposes of higher technical work in the country; and the resemblance is not accidental. For in the long run the institutes in England had much to do with technical education, and more than one technical institute had its beginning in a mechanics' institution.

If the serious study of scientific principles had been all that the mechanics' institutes offered, it would be difficult to account for the huge numbers that flocked to them, or for the dissatisfaction with their courses so often expressed by active working-class critics towards the middle of the

⁷ Dobbs, A. E. *Education and Social Movements, 1700-1850*, 174. London 1919.

⁸ Adult Education Committee, 14.

⁹ Dobbs, 173.

century. The fact is that, even in the thirties, the institutes had changed, and Brougham, in 1835, could refer to the 'industrious portion of the *middle classes*, to whose use the Mechanics' Institutes are more especially devoted'.¹⁰ For a select few some of the early institutes provided adequate and digestible mental food. But in all probability the enthusiasts who brought them into being had overestimated what was possible to men who had little education and who might be working from twelve to sixteen hours a day. The appeal of the institutes even in their early days was to the aristocrats of the working class, the engineers and mechanics, who, as Trevelyan reminds us,¹¹ 'had already gained more than they had lost by the Industrial Revolution'. Birkbeck in Glasgow was dealing with Scottish workmen whose general education, received in the parish schools, was superior to anything provided for the English working class. Shortly after their foundation, too, many of the institutes had ceased to pay fees for the lectures, and were therefore dependent on the generosity of lecturers. Continuous courses became more difficult to arrange, and the isolated lecture was all too often an ineffective substitute. Whereas, in the early days of the London Institute, as many as ninety lectures had been delivered in one branch of natural philosophy, the number had fallen to two or three a year by the middle of the century.¹² There can be no doubt that the mechanics' institutes departed very early in their history from the severely scientific curriculum described in their original rules. Even from their foundation certain of the institutes had experimented by introducing classes in literature, languages, vocal music, and subjects of a more elementary nature. Indeed, the subjects introduced during the first year of the London Institute ranged from 'jurisprudence to the

¹⁰ Quoted by Adamson, J. W. *English Education*, 41. Cambridge 1930. (Italics mine)

¹¹ Trevelyan, G. M. *British History in the Nineteenth Century*, 165. London 1934.

¹² Dobbs, 176.

structure of chimneys; from hydrostatics to Greek and Roman antiquities, and from mummies to savings-banks'.¹³

These changes in the curriculum of the institutes were accompanied by an equally great change in the composition of their membership. Whereas the original appeal had been to working men, of whom large numbers attended the early lectures and classes, the proportion of 'mechanics' among the members had fallen off by 1850, and there had been an influx of the middle class. Hudson at about that date described the London Mechanics' Institution as 'little more than an association of shop-keepers and their apprentices, law-copyists and attorneys' clerks'.¹⁴ It has been suggested that there was a deliberate attempt to keep control out of the hands of working men¹⁵, but this explanation of the decline in the proportion of mechanics is too simple. The loss of worker-control arose more by accident than design. Embarrassed by debt and heavy commitments, the institutes had usually to choose one of three means of support: high membership fees (which would indirectly exclude mechanics), wealthy patrons (who would naturally require some voice in management), or large audiences (to be attracted by a considerable watering-down of the original curriculum). Any one of these three would lead to the same result—the loss of identification of the working class with the purpose of the institutes. Whatever the cause, the facts are plain enough: the institutes were, with few exceptions, *mechanics'* institutes in name only. Even in Manchester, 'where special efforts were made to retain the original membership, the working class members of the Institute averaged in the six years from 1835-41 only 309 out of 1,184 members'.¹⁶

That it is easy to underline too heavily the direct attempt on the part of the wealthy to defeat the ends of the institutes is seen from the very interesting summary of their history given in a speech by Mr. Justice Chapman on the occasion

¹³ *Ibid.*, 177.

¹⁴ Quoted by Adamson, 41.

¹⁵ Hodgen, 57.

¹⁶ Adult Education Committee, 16.

of the opening of the hall of the Athenaeum and Mechanics' Institute in Wellington in 1850. Chapman was speaking without reference material, but he was well qualified to express opinions; before he came to New Zealand he had been a member of commissions on industrial matters and he had an intimate knowledge of industrial England. Referring to the early classes he is reported as saying that . . . all but mechanics were excluded, and those sciences only were encouraged which were useful to mechanics *as* mechanics. Their prosperous condition was from 1825 to 1831. . . . It soon became apparent that the limitation of what he should call the jurisdiction of the Mechanics' Institution over both persons and subjects was defective, and their plans were extended, but all improvement seems to have been suspended about 1831 or 1832 by the excitement consequent upon the Reform Bill. The interest taken by the British public in that grand and beneficial measure absorbed all other feelings, and the Mechanics' Institutions shared in the general stagnation from which they scarcely emerged until about 1835 or 1836, and then only by considerable enlargement and extension of their plan. In 1838 a new class of Institutions grew up in Manchester called Lyceums. They were the old Mechanics' Institutes and something more. Their plan opened them to all persons—to all subjects of knowledge, and to *amusement of an innocent and wholesome character*.¹⁷

The Lyceums to which Chapman referred were established in various parts of England, and have been described by Dobbs¹⁸ as 'institutes of a lower grade, combining recreation and miscellaneous instruction of an elementary type'. They resembled, too, the Literary and Philosophical

¹⁷ *Wellington Independent*, 13 April 1850. (Italics mine)

¹⁸ *Op. cit.*, 182. At about the same time, or a little earlier, Josiah Holbrook, of Massachusetts, U.S.A., outlined his vast scheme for a national system of Lyceums. Though the more pretentious scheme was never realized, the town Lyceums achieved considerable prominence. The Boston Lyceum, presided over by Daniel Webster, attracted such lecturers as Emerson, Thoreau, Lowell, Holmes, and Agassiz. Many of Emerson's essays were originally Lyceum lectures, and he repeated some of them to English audiences made up of members of the mechanics' institutes and literary societies. As such the American Lyceum ceased to exist at the time of the Civil War. (See Noffsinger, J. S. *Correspondence Schools, Lyceums, and Chautauquas*. New York 1926.) The term Lyceum is not unknown in New Zealand: e.g. one such organization existed at Huntly.

Institutes which had developed from about 1780 and were widespread by 1836. Institutions of a slightly different type, known as Athenaeums, became popular after the foundation of the Manchester Athenaeum in 1836. The distinctions between such literary institutes and the mechanics' institutes became less marked as time went on, and there was a general tendency to combine the functions of both groups under the title 'Athenaeum and Mechanics' Institute', an explicit recognition, as it were, of the middle-class flavour that the institutes had acquired.

Of the three features of the mechanics' institutes—classes, lectures, and the provision of a reading-room—the first very soon took a minor place. In 1850, in the 59 institutes of the Yorkshire Union giving class instruction, only one-quarter of the 11,000 members were attending the classes, and of these about four-fifths were in elementary classes. Seventy-three of the other institutes had been obliged to suspend all but their language and discussion classes. Lectures continued, and, during the first fifty years of the century, the libraries provided almost the only facilities available to the student without means. In 1848 there were probably not more than ten 'public' libraries in any way available to the general public. The work of providing something more than the cheap editions and tracts that were designed for the 'lower orders' fell largely on the mechanics' institutes. Their libraries and reading-rooms continued to serve a useful purpose long after the classes had disappeared and the lectures had been abandoned.

The rise and fall of the mechanics' institutes may be illustrated by two examples. The Sheffield Mechanics' Institute came into being in 1832, some nine years after the foundation of a Mechanics' Library. It provided classes in reading, drawing, grammar, geography, arithmetic, Latin, and French, and later in the philosophy of the human mind, history, and chronology. After many fluctuations of fortune, arising in part from religious and financial difficulties, it was

amalgamated with the Sheffield Athenaeum, a news room and library that had been founded in 1847. From this time onwards its history was one of decline until, after the passing of the technical education Acts, it came into competition with technical classes and closed its doors. The history of the Leicester Mechanics' Institute (1833-71) shows a similar deterioration: it is a story of high ideals, initial religious opposition, financial difficulties during the forties, a declining stage lasting about thirteen years when it was little more than a club, and final absorption into a public library. Its lectures were at first well attended and covered a wide range of subjects—the eighteen given in the first year dealing with electricity, chemistry, domestic and social economy, geology, pneumatics, hydrostatics, and 'impressive delivery'. As time went on single lectures rather than connected courses became common, and topics of general interest replaced scientific subjects. Among the ten lectures listed for 1847 were two by R. W. Emerson—*Shakespeare the Poet* and *Domestic Life*—for which he received a fee of fourteen guineas and brought in a profit to the Institute of seven shillings. (The few institutes that could pay these high fees did so by attracting audiences of six or seven hundred, comparatively few of whom can have been mechanics.) By 1855 lectures were held only at infrequent intervals, and were then referred to as 'literary entertainment'. The committee explained its inability to arrange lectures by stating that the field was fully occupied by various new societies that had grown up in the town. Among the classes offered by the Leicester Institute were the following: arithmetic, mathematics, drawing and design, instrumental and vocal music, natural history, and phonography (Pitman's Short-hand).¹⁹ At their best they rarely had an average attendance of more than a dozen, though the population of the city was then in excess of 50,000.

¹⁹ See Taylor, J. 'A Nineteenth Century Experiment in Adult Education', in *Adult Education*, December 1938, and Lott, F. B. *The Story of the Leicester Mechanics' Institute* (Leicester 1935), which is particularly interesting since Lott had personal acquaintance with the Institute in the early sixties.

It is not to be thought that all the institutes disappeared in the fifties. They grew in number²⁰ for some time after 1850; but they made little pretence at being more than reading-rooms and meeting-places. Some of the older institutes changed their names and called themselves Lyceums or Athenaeums. A few gave rise to, or became, Working Men's Clubs. Of the remainder, those which did not become absorbed in the development of technical education—giving birth to various grades of technical schools and colleges—lingered on under the old title. But with a few rare and notable exceptions the name meant little.

The third motive in adult education during this period, the political, had found expression in the last years of the eighteenth century. In 1792, the year in which the second part of Paine's *Rights of Man* was appearing, Thomas Hardy, a shoemaker, founded his Corresponding Society, 'the first political and educational club for working-men'.²¹ The Chartist movement with its social, economic, and political aspirations produced attempts to provide education with a political motive, the most important of which were the schemes drawn up by William Lovett in his pursuit of 'bread, knowledge, and freedom'. It is unnecessary here to give a description of such plans or of the great appeal of the ideas of Robert Owen. It is enough to say that the educational efforts that continued within the Co-operative Movement, long after the fiasco of 1848, were directed not at the mere acquirement of knowledge, but at developing the qualities enabling men to live in a co-operative society. Although the political trend in adult education is not easily detected in the early history of New Zealand, it is highly probable that many individual men and women who came to the new country had been influenced by Chartist ideals.

Of the three motives mentioned briefly in this chapter it was that which gave rise to the mechanics' institutes that

²⁰ In 1861 there were 1200 institutes, with over 200,000 members.

²¹ Trevelyan, 67.

made itself most strongly felt in New Zealand. But it was the institutes in decline that were transplanted—mechanics' institutes that catered for the needs not of mechanics but of a much wider cross-section of the population. Indeed, had the institutes retained the ideals of the original foundations, they could have found no root-hold in a pioneering land where working-class organization was hardly known, and scarcely to be possible for almost half a century.

CHAPTER II

New Zealand Beginnings 1840-70

* ————— *

It is difficult for the third-generation New Zealander, living in days of radio and speedy travel, to imagine the isolation of the early settlements. Nor can he readily appreciate the spirit and outlook with which these young social groups set about transplanting in a new soil the institutions that had made life bearable in the older land. Too often one pictures the early settlers as they appear in photographs taken at old settlers' reunions, when they were men and women of advanced age, bearing in their physical frame the marks of long and continued struggle in all the rawness of colonial life. It is much more difficult to picture them as they were in the early days of the settlements—men and women with youth as their main asset, vigorous, drawn from many walks of life, some of them possessing a cultural background that was to be rather remote from most New Zealanders for many a long day. The infant settlements had natural leaders whose influence was at once personal and official. Many of them had been trained for the professions; some had university associations, were personal friends of leaders of British thought, and had, in the manner of the gentry of the day, made the grand tour of Europe. Others among the settlers had felt the harshness of want, and had

known what it was to possess skill that could not find a market. All had youth, and a hope of building a better social structure or of carving out a career in the new country.

Such men and women, commencing a new life in the Company's settlements, might be excused a degree of nostalgia. There is something at once fine and pathetic in their attempts to retain their ties with the older culture, to reproduce the kind of life to which they had been accustomed. They brought with them the ritual of lodges and friendly societies; they preserved the institutions and customs of English life; they addressed public meetings with all the pomp, ceremony, and eloquence expected of members of the House of Commons; they wrote weighty leading articles in their ever-multiplying local newspapers; they reported local festivities and mundane events as though these were epoch-shattering occurrences. They were not playing at English life; they took themselves seriously, with all the seriousness of youth; they were living the only kind of life they knew. Links with the old land were forged anew on mail days, when local bickerings were crowded out of the weekly newspaper by many months' accumulation of wars and revolutions. In the simple raupo hut or wooden shed that went under the title of 'Exchange and Library', news of the world outside could be digested at leisure, and there one could thumb the pages of *The Times*, the *Edinburgh Review*, or the *Illustrated London News*, and live vicariously through a six-months-old controversy on literature, legislation, or science.

Even before the settlements had been founded, some organized attempt had been made to provide for the intellectual life of the settlers. The New Zealand Company settlers were usually given a supply of books. The long voyage out offered ample time for discussion of the founding of some form of institute that would supply the needs of the reading public. Thus the Literary and Scientific Institute at Nelson had its beginning in the Company's grant of £100,

which was augmented by private subscription on board the *Whitby* and *Will Watch*.¹ Even before the departure of the first settlers to Port Nicholson a committee was set up to provide for the 'literary, scientific, and philanthropic institutions' of the Colony. Under the chairmanship of Dr. G. S. Evans, this committee obtained contributions of books and scientific apparatus.² The Otago settlers took with them a copy of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* and upwards of 500 other volumes.³ The *Encyclopædia* which accompanied the settlers sent out by the New Plymouth Company was religiously preserved through the years.⁴

While the Exchange and Library was a common feature of many of the settlements, more consciously educational aims were expressed in the mechanics' institutes which rapidly made their appearance in almost all the centres of population. Within ten years of the foundation of the Colony there were at least four such bodies in existence, while the initial steps had been taken in the founding of others. Attempts to discover the numbers of such institutions have proved unsuccessful, but it is certain that, exclusive of the Wellington district (for which returns are not available), some eleven mechanics' institutes, twenty-one athenaeums and mechanics' institutes, and seven literary institutes were among the bodies applying for registration under the Library Acts from the seventies onwards. This number does not include at least five other mechanics' institutes which had been previously absorbed into public libraries. It seems highly probable that the number may have reached about eighty by the end of the century.⁵

The interested traveller may find in many a small settlement in New Zealand a weatherbeaten hall bearing the

¹ *Nelson Examiner*, Vol. I, No. 1.

² Macmorran, G. *Some Schools and Schoolmasters of Early Wellington*. Wellington 1900.

³ Wakefield, E. J. *Handbook for New Zealand*. London 1848.

⁴ Wells, B. *The History of Taranaki*. 1878.

⁵ Two mechanics' institutes were registered as recently as 1934. A mechanics' institute at Te One, in the Chatham Islands, established under the Act of 1908, was finally disbanded in 1943.

legend 'Mechanics' Institute'—possibly the only remaining record of a once live body. Here and there he may find an 'Athenaeum and Mechanics' Institute'⁶ still providing subscribers with books, and still working under a constitution that allows for the arrangement of lectures and classes. Buried in the reserve stocks of some of our larger public libraries, there are volumes bearing the impress of the local Mechanics' Institute from which the library sprang. In more than one instance a largish building is labelled 'Working Men's Club, Athenaeum, and Mechanics' Institute'; but any knowledge of its original educational functions may have been completely forgotten. Only here and there a conscientious secretary has preserved the minute books of the original institution, and from these one gains some knowledge of the courage and ideals of the founders, the disappointments and difficulties that awaited them, and the final triumph of poverty and apathy over enthusiasm. But from these fragments and from the early newspapers something of the history of this movement in adult education can be pieced together.

At the end of the first year of Wellington's existence a public meeting was held in the Queen's Hotel to establish a Working Men's Association for the purpose of acquiring useful knowledge by means of a library, discussions, and lectures.⁷ At about the same time there came into being the Port Nicholson Exchange and General Library to which was handed over the collection of books presented to the settlers before they left England.⁸ The Exchange found its first home in Dicky Barrett's raupo whare. In 1842 financial difficulties caused the members to offer all the books and periodicals to a new organization then being discussed. This was the 'Port Nicholson Mechanics' Institute, Public School and Library',⁹

⁶ Examples occur in Dunedin and Opatiki.

⁷ Ward, Lewis E. *Early Wellington*, 74.

⁸ Macmorran, *op. cit.*, 72.

⁹ Wakefield, E. J. *Adventure in New Zealand*, Vol. II, 316 (London 1845), records that the Mechanics' Institute conducted one of the two boys' schools in the settlement.

which came into being in April of the same year, and of which Colonel Wakefield was president. The first lecture, entitled *Education*, was delivered by Jonas Woodward, who had formerly been a master of the British Day School at Shoreditch. Woodward was one of the most active figures in adult education at this time. Not only was he secretary of the short-lived Working Men's Association, but he conducted, presumably in connection with the Mechanics' Institute, an undenominational Sunday School for instruction in 'Bible Knowledge and Reading'.

The first half-yearly report of the Port Nicholson Mechanics' Institute gave every reason for satisfaction. The committee reported that more than a dozen lectures had been held, a discussion club had been formed, there were 68 pupils in the school, and the library contained 160 volumes. Perhaps more important, the Governor had promised the grant of a portion of the Lambton Quay reserve as a site for a permanent building. At this point fate proved unkind. The *Raupe House Ordinance* (1844), passed to minimize the danger of fires in built-up areas, deprived the Institute of its rooms. The school was continued in Tod's store, and the library was temporarily packed away. In the same year the foundation stone of the proposed new building was laid on the Lambton Quay site. Few buildings can have been more auspiciously begun. A public holiday was declared; there was a procession such as the four-year old Colony can hardly have seen before; the Pacific Lodge of Freemasons, accompanied by the officers and brethren of the Loyal Britannia Lodge of Oddfellows and the Independent Order of Rechabites, added colour to the occasion; the pupils of the schools were there in force. His Honour Major Richmond, assisted by the Worshipful Master, declared the stone well and truly laid. The tumult over, appeals were made for timber and bricks with which to erect the building, and some contributions in kind were received. Six months later the affairs of the Institute, like those of the Colony

generally, were in a depressed condition. The Secretary of the Institute, John Knowles, returned to England, and for the four succeeding years nothing existed but a foundation stone and a few pieces of building material.

In 1848, largely owing to the energy of the new secretary, William Lyon, the books, which had been damaged by moisture and 'the attentions of rats', were salvaged and given a temporary home in what had been Colonel M'Cleverty's office. A new committee had plans drawn for a permanent building, and began the arduous work of collecting subscriptions. By the middle of the following year over £200 had been subscribed, while an additional 250 volumes of new and standard works had arrived from England. A meeting held in the New Barrett's Hotel on 11 July 1849 decided to change the name of the organization to 'The Wellington Athenaeum and Mechanics' Institute'. The change of name was appropriate, for among the subscribers were few who could be called mechanics.

The new hall was opened early in 1850. A contemporary report of the occasion throws so much light on the objects of the early institutes, and illustrates so well the extent to which they had departed from the original tradition, that it is worth quoting at some length:

The Hall, which is built after a design furnished by Mr. Roberts, in the early Grecian style, is 50 feet from front to back by 21 feet in width. As funds permit wings will be added, and then the building will prove an ornament to the town and a credit to the inhabitants. The hall was most tastefully decorated; flags and streamers, evergreens and flowers, adding every description of colour and hue to grace the scene. . . . About 250 ladies and gentlemen were present, a company more varied and interesting than any which has hitherto assembled within any building in this district. *No false pride kept the élite of the place from attending* and we can only trust that future gatherings will display as great an amount of respectability and talent as that which graced the opening of the really public and praiseworthy Institution.¹⁰

¹⁰ *Wellington Independent*, 13 April 1850. *(Italics mine)

Neither the concluding sentence of this description nor the account of the proceedings during the evening would lead one to believe that the institute was designed to meet the special needs of 'mechanics'. The programme for the opening ceremony included speeches by Mr. Justice Chapman and William Fox, the singing of glees (including 'Hail, Smiling Morn!') and items by the band of the 65th Regiment. About ten o'clock the room was cleared of seats—

when the votaries of Terpsichore commenced 'tripping (sic) on the light fantastic toe' and we need scarcely add that the ladies and gentlemen vied with each other as to who should be first and foremost in the bewitching amusement. The party broke up about 3 o'clock, highly delighted with their evening's entertainment.¹¹

It is a far cry from Birkbeck's Glasgow students to such sounds of revelry by night.

The serious purpose of the institute was dealt with ably by the President, Mr. Justice Chapman, whose speech gives an insight into the ideals of the New Zealand movement. He impressed upon the committee, for instance, the importance of making the library, then a collection of between 700 and 800 volumes, 'the known repository for every publication relating to the history of the Colony'. Had Chapman's advice been followed there would today have been an historical goldmine for research students. He stressed the value of classes, remarking that 'the Committee would, no doubt, promote some classes, but any small number of students might erect themselves into a class for the pursuit of any branch of study'. It is interesting to find that the question of controversial subjects concerned people even in the fifties:

On the subject of politics some difficulty had arisen in England to which he would allude. Ought politics to be admitted at all? The first answer was naturally No! but then it was said, 'You admit political newspapers, can you stop talk in a reading room?' Hence it early became obvious that politics could not wholly be

¹¹ *Ibid.*

excluded. . . . We must draw a line somewhere, and it seemed to him that the difficulty of doing so was not very [great]. First, as a body, the Society should take no part whatever in any political measure. It should in fact have no politics. As to individuals it was right that every man should have clear political views. No Englishman could perform his constitutional function without [them]; but if a body like this on the vote of the majority took a particular line—the result would be that the minority would probably withdraw and the Society should lose many of its most valued members—for it is to be hoped that men of all shades of political opinion will associate here. But there is a science in politics the study of which should be encouraged. The science of Government was one of the noblest studies in which an Englishman could engage.

It is a pity that people in more recent times have not been able always to make the distinction which Chapman drew between the opinions of individuals and the opinions of the body to which they belong. Eighty years after his address adult education had not yet fully established its right to be controversial. It is all the more interesting to find that the colonists were exhorted to study the principles on which colonization was conducted—then, of course, a highly explosive topic.

For more than a quarter of a century the Wellington Athenaeum and Mechanics' Institute continued to serve as the main library in the city, and provided a meeting-hall in which many of the city's chief functions were held. Then, with what proved to be too much faith in the future, the committee decided to build more commodious premises on a site near Plimmer's Steps. The foundation stone of a three-storey wooden building, for long known to Wellingtonians as the Exchange Building, was laid by the Marquis of Normanby. The venture proved too ambitious. A large part of the £8,000 required to complete the building had to be borrowed, while even the rents of the ground floor shops and the hall proved an inadequate supplement to the income from other sources. In the end, the mortgagees sold the

property and the Athenaeum and Mechanics' Institute became a tenant in what had once been its own property. The land was lost to the city, and after considerable negotiation the civic authorities acquired for £450 the 6,000 books that remained, as the nucleus of the public library opened in 1893.

In the larger centres of population the institutes had a history somewhat similar to that of the Wellington Institute, though in few were there comparable architectural aspirations. The Auckland Mechanics' Institute, founded in 1842, received a grant of land from the Governor in the following year. On this site, at the corner of High Street and Chancery Lane, was erected a 'respectable wooden building' used as a library and lecture-room. On modern standards the building would be described very differently. (Indeed in 1875 it is described in Wise's Directory as 'a tumble-down old building which does no credit to the cause'.) It followed a design that appears to have been popular for many years—a gabled main hall, part of which was partitioned off to serve as a reading-room, with a tiny entrance-porch attached at one side. Architecturally it was much less imposing than many church halls of some of our smaller congregations. Even in its early days it proved to be too small for its purpose, and a contemporary report states:

The lowness of the ceiling and the awkward confines of the room . . . would mar the melodies of an Orpheus. But it is well to have such a room, faulty though it be, and still better to have such an accomplished band of choristers able and willing to make amends for its many disadvantages.¹²

Small and inadequate though it was, the building served as a community centre and as the main library of the city for thirty-seven years before it was absorbed in the Auckland Public Library. The hall of the Institute was the scene of most of the musical and intellectual gatherings of Auckland for many years.

¹² 'Auckland News' in *Wellington Independent*, 25 March 1848.

Though the Nelson Literary Institute from its foundation made little pretence at being a mechanics' institute, its functions were similar to those actually performed by institutes in other centres. It is not possible to say how far the movement to establish institutes extended in the Nelson province, but in 1846 the village of Richmond possessed a Mechanics' Institute which held meetings in the Wesleyan Chapel. William Fox, who took such a prominent part in the affairs of the Wellington Mechanics' Institute, presided at the inaugural meeting of the Richmond Institute and said: . . . it had long been his desire to see institutions of the class they had now met to establish spread over the settlement, and he had been prevented only by the unsettled state of [their] affairs from making an effort long since to set them on foot. . . . He had witnessed the great benefits which mechanics' institutes had wrought in England, and he hoped to see them exercise a corresponding influence here.

That there was some difference of opinion about the function of mechanics' institutes in New Zealand is well illustrated by a letter from the Rev. C. L. Reay, read at the inaugural meeting. In his letter that gentleman considered that 'mechanics' institution' would be 'the least applicable of any name that could be chosen—inapplicable as well to the present population and condition of Richmond as also to the character of the place for years to come'.¹³ By way of further comment he raised the question of political discussion:

One of the great evils of mechanics' institutes in England is that they are very soon converted into a species of political affair. If, however, the inhabitants of Richmond are undertaking the present business on right principles—'Whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we should do all to the glory of God' . . . it may be a means of improving their knowledge of God's works: and then, I trust, they may, like the great Sir Isaac Newton, think more humbly of themselves the more they increase in knowledge. Hoping that, in connection with the matter in hand,

¹³ *Nelson Examiner*, 21 November 1846. The Richmond Institute, built probably in the early sixties, survived until about twenty years ago.

the villagers of Richmond may find sober and rational and useful employment for their leisure hours, I trust the undertaking may be prospered.¹⁴

There is point in this letter: for in Richmond, as elsewhere in the Colony, very few of the adherents of the institutes, and still fewer of the executive officers, can have been considered 'mechanics' in any sense of the word. Fox, Aldred, Harkness, Snow, Barnicoat, and Thompson had all been what the New Zealand Company's records would have called 'cabin passengers'.¹⁵

Within a fortnight of its foundation the 'Richmond Mechanics' Institution, for the purposes of mutual instruction and general cultivation of literature and science' had over fifty members, and was providing a comprehensive programme consisting of public readings on Monday and Saturday evenings, instruction in the 3Rs on Wednesdays and Fridays, lectures or discussions on Thursdays. The ordinary subscription of fourpence per lunar month can scarcely have debarred many from attendance, and for some time the Institution attracted a considerable following from among the younger members of the settlement.

As new settlements were founded and others commenced to grow, mechanics' institutes of one kind or another made their appearance in most parts of the Colony. The prospectus of the Dunedin Mechanics' Institute was issued in 1851. In the following year Captain Cargill fixed the site for a building at the intersection of Princes, Rattray, and High Streets. William Langlands, the first secretary, appears to have been the originator of the scheme, and one of the earliest contributors was James Macandrew, who made a donation of twenty guineas. A comprehensive syllabus was drawn up and the institute started with every prospect of success. 'But', says Hocken, 'the unfortunate habit of bicker-

¹⁴ An almost identical protest was made at the opening of the Mechanics' Institute at Leicester, England, thirteen years earlier.

¹⁵ A comparison of the office holders in the Nelson Literary Institution is interesting. The list contains some of the best known names in the early settlement, including F. Dillon Bell, William Fox, Alfred Domett, and Alexander Macshane.

ing which seemed to possess the community jeopardized it.' The opening of the new building with a soiree in 1853 shows signs of discord. 'In his opening remarks the chairman referred to the "shallowminded would-be aristocrats who sneered at the institution",' and it was left to Mr. Burns to introduce a more pleasant note 'with a speech of much dignity and eloquence, free from all unpleasant allusion.'

The original building had two reading-rooms and a large room capable of accommodating a hundred people. It appears, however, that little use was made of it. For the enthusiasm that marked the Institute's early days quickly vanished, and Hocken records that (presumably in 1859) 'The Mechanics' Institute had now been in existence for more than six years, but had proved an entire failure as far as the great objects of such an association were concerned. It had few members, no books, and no classes of instruction. . . .'¹⁶ At this stage it was certainly not lack of money that caused the difficulty—there was a credit balance of £80—but rather apathy. Accordingly the Mechanics' Institute was amalgamated with the Athenaeum in 1859. In 1870 the combined Athenaeum and Mechanics' Institute became incorporated, and moved into the building which it still occupies in the Octagon. The purposes of the combined institution are set out in the Ordinance of Incorporation¹⁷ as follows: 'to form and carry on a lending and reference library, a reading-room with a supply of newspapers and periodicals, educational classes and lectures, meetings for social and intellectual improvement, the collection of scientific apparatus or other things illustrative of science or useful education.'

Several other institutes had their beginning at about the same time as the Dunedin Mechanics' Institute, and other bodies were formed with similar objects. Thus a Colonists'

¹⁶ Hocken, T. M. *Contributions to the Early History of New Zealand*, 186. London 1898.

¹⁷ *Dunedin Athenaeum and Mechanics' Institute Ordinance* (Otago Provincial Council) 1870.

Society was founded in Lyttelton in 1853 and for at least four years was 'actively and very successfully engaged in the diffusion of useful knowledge by means of lectures, evening classes, and an excellent circulating library'.¹⁸ The Rev. W. Aldred, a Wesleyan missionary who had been for some time in New Zealand, gave instruction in Maori 'to a large class, comprising some of the most respectable citizens of Lyttelton, and two or three of the clergy'. (The distinction is not, one hopes, significant.) In the same year an institute was founded in the Hutt. A mechanics' institute was opened in Christchurch in 1859, but was later merged in the Christchurch Literary Institute.

In the sixties more institutes made their appearance in such places as Napier, Blenheim, Picton, Oxford, Timaru, Waimate, and Oamaru, while in the following decade the movement had spread to most parts of the Colony, including Opotiki, Charleston, Temuka, Port Chalmers, Tokatea, Papakura, Newmarket, Rodney, Whangarei, Waiuku, Tauranga, and Invercargill. In no part of New Zealand did mechanics' institutes become more firmly established than in Otago. Even the smaller gold-mining towns appear to have had some variety of library or mechanics' institute, and Vogel¹⁹ records that there were about eighty in successful operation in the province in 1875. Anthony Trollope, writing a few years earlier, mentions his visit to the Athenaeum at Lawrence.²⁰ Speaking of Otago he says, 'In all these towns there are libraries, and the books are strongly bound and well-thumbed. Carlyle, Macaulay, and Dickens are certainly better known to small communities in New Zealand than they are to similar congregations of men and women at home.'²¹

¹⁸ Paul, Robt. B. *Letters from Canterbury, N.Z.* London 1857. (Fildes Collection.)

¹⁹ Vogel, Julius. *Official Handbook of New Zealand*. (London 1875.) Vogel is, of course, referring to institutes and libraries and not to mechanics' institutes alone.

²⁰ *Australia and New Zealand*. London 1873.

²¹ Cf. Munn, R. and Barr, J. *New Zealand Libraries* (Christchurch 1934). 'At Queenstown there is a collection [of books] that has survived the years, and the collection does honour to the literary tastes of those early days; the present day selection being insipid beside the cultural standard of the past.' There are many confirmations of this judgment from other sources.

The many institutes that grew up in New Zealand during the first forty or fifty years of settlement were not so much native growths as conscious imitations of the English pattern, and since that pattern was changing, there is a distinct difference in the form of the institutes founded in different settlements at different times. The early institutes, particularly those founded before, say, 1865, made some attempt to provide for classes and lectures. Those which came into being at a later date were founded by people for whom the ideals of Birkbeck were not even a memory. The name 'mechanics' institute' might be added because of custom or in imitation of the institutions in other settlements, but it had no real significance. A room in which draughts or chess could be played was often the only surviving indication of the original functions of the institutes.

THE INSTITUTES IN ACTION

(a) *Classes.* It will be recalled that the mechanics' institutes in England endeavoured to achieve their objects through classes, lectures, and libraries. In the early New Zealand settlements this threefold work was undertaken in conditions very different from those existing in the older land. In an English city in the twenties it would have been possible to find a large number of 'mechanics' eager to extend their knowledge of the trades in which they were engaged. The scattered settlements of New Zealand twenty years later had neither the numbers, nor the specialization of industry, nor (despite the distinctions implied in such place names as Judge's Bay and Mechanics' Bay) the settled stratification of life and employment, that would make possible any strong demand for the type of classes the institutes were originally planned to provide. Whatever the cause, the classes that made their appearance in the first twenty years or so of the mechanics' institutes were designed mainly to provide general education for 'under-educated' adults and unedu-

cated youths. Though here and there a mechanics' institute may have offered classes that marked the beginnings of technical education, it was other forms of voluntary organization and the Education Boards that finally pioneered technical education in this country.²²

Shortly after its foundation the Wellington Athenaeum and Mechanics' Institute sponsored classes in drawing and instrumental music, while an advertisement in 1850 invited applications for membership of classes in vocal music, French, English, and elocution. The rules of these classes²³ are surprisingly similar in certain respects to rules adopted later by the Workers' Educational Association:

1. Any three or more members wishing to form a class are to make application to the committee, stating the objects of the class and the time they propose to meet; but no class shall be formed without the sanction of the committee obtained in answer to such application.
2. Each class shall, at its first meeting or as soon after as possible, elect a secretary . . . and form rules for the management of the class, a copy of which rules shall be presented to the committee at its first monthly meeting for approval.
3. Members of the Institute only shall be eligible to become members of the classes meeting in the Institute.
4. The secretary of each class shall, on the first day of each quarter, pay to the treasurer in advance at the rate of one shilling for each member of the class to cover the expenses of candles etc.; the class not to meet more than once each week.
5. All classes [are] to be under the superintendence of the Library Sub-committee, who shall report thereon according to the minute of the 5th June, 1849.

The progress of classes in the fifties was, however, slow, and the subjects studied were those offered in the English institutes during the period of decline. Instrumental drawing and vocal music remained the main courses in the intellectual feast, though there were many critics who lamented

²² Stout, Robert. *Public Education in New Zealand* (1885), 25.

²³ *Wellington Independent*, 11 May 1850.

the lack of interest on the part of mechanics. In 1852 the committee of the Wellington Institute complained that the classes were 'scarcely such as are usually contemplated in mechanics' institutes' and that 'the pupils were almost invariably boys, instead of youths of 15 years and upwards'.²⁴ An endeavour to establish classes of a different nature was made two years later when the Rev. R. B. Paul and Mr. Edward Toomath offered to provide instruction in two subjects selected from the following list: French, Latin, German, or Greek; algebra, arithmetic, or English grammar and composition. By 1856 regular classes had been established in grammar and arithmetic (Edward Toomath); logic (Rev. A. Baker); French and Italian (Rev. J. J. P. O'Reilly); while W. H. Holmes for several years successfully taught a drawing class and two 'Hullah' classes in vocal music. This temporary success was only obtained by special effort, and was the result of a conference held in the previous year. The chairman's remarks on that occasion show quite clearly that the need for continuous study was fully realized:

The charter given to the Institute mentioned the promotion of education as the main end to be accomplished, and though this was in some measure secured by a reading-room, library, and lectures, it was felt that *these were only subservient to that of disciplining the minds of the community by promoting the regular study of definite subjects.*²⁵

Despite a good deal of heart-searching and attempts to develop the classes in the early institutes, most committees seem to have come reluctantly to the conclusion that the demand for classes of the type offered did not exist and was hard to create. The history of the Wellington classes was paralleled in other centres, and the curriculum appears to have been similar. In Auckland a drawing class had been in operation for some years prior to 1864, when its progress was interrupted by the use of the Mechanics' Institute hall as a hospital for Maori War casualties. Dunedin classes—in

²⁴ *Wellington Independent*, 9 May 1852.

²⁵ *New Zealand Spectator*, 23 June 1855. (Italics mine)

arithmetic, geography, English grammar, and writing—had more continuity²⁶, and were held from 1857 to about 1865 and again from 1870 to 1872; thereafter they were held in conjunction with the Caledonian Society until 1885. The success of these classes probably owed something to the Scottish tradition, and a good deal to the fact that Dunedin was at that time the chief industrial town in New Zealand. (b) *Lectures*. If the classes met with comparatively little success from the beginning, no one could complain about the lack of support given to the lectures during the early years of the institutes. In Dunedin in the early sixties meetings had sometimes to be held in First Church because the Institute hall could not accommodate the audience; in Wellington the hall was frequently uncomfortably full; in Auckland high officials had to scramble for seats. And to get to these meetings settlers had often to travel long distances through unlighted and ill-paved streets in the depths of winter.

It is doubtful if similar subjects would attract audiences of half the size in any New Zealand city today.²⁷ In the fifties and sixties, however, opportunities for 'refined amusement' were limited, and lectures on *People's Delusions* or *The Honey Bee* did not come into competition with the cinema or the radio. For those whose tastes did not run to liquor, or to the melodrama offered by the stock theatres of the time, there were few forms of cultural recreation that were not centred either in the churches or in the institutes. For it must be confessed that it was cultural entertainment rather than serious study that accounted for the popularity of the lectures, and it is in this spirit that the lectures are frequently described in the contemporary press. There were

²⁶ Nicol, J. *The Technical Schools of New Zealand*, 10. Wellington 1940.

²⁷ Few modern audiences could be expected to sit through lectures lasting for more than two hours. Chapman in one of his letters records that he invariably spoke from brief notes and sometimes became oblivious to the passage of time. On one occasion, when he thought he had spoken for about sixty minutes, he found that his address had lasted for two and a half hours. Letter of H. S. Chapman, 5 July 1851 (MS in Turnbull Library).

undoubtedly a few people who joined the institutes for more serious reasons, and a letter from a young settler informs his father that 'A Mechanics' Institute was formed last night; from what I hear . . . it was well supported. I shall be a contributor, following your example in promoting matters of usefulness, if not with purse—what is more valuable, with personal exertion.'²⁸ For the most part, however, the institutes are included in less serious pictures of the recreational life of the settlements:

There are horticultural shows, theatrical amusements and other entertainments. Choral and literary, and other societies have been established. Three or four balls in the course of a year, and an occasional picnic or water party, are among the amusements which aid in beguiling the labours of daily life; while temperance tea-meetings, school feasts, and lectures suffice for the graver portion of the community.²⁹

Considering the limited number of speakers that could be drawn on for lecturing panels the wide variety of subjects is surprising. Here and there one comes across an outmoded subject like *Phrenology*, or *Animal Magnetism*, but for the most part the topics might well figure in the syllabus of popular lectures nearly a century later. The press reports of some of them show that the speakers were well-informed and up-to-date in their reading. Ministers of religion made up the majority of the lecturers, but men like Fox and Woodward had wide practical experience and stores of learning on which to draw. As years went on, however, it became increasingly difficult to find new speakers and new topics, and the Nelson Institute very naturally reported that 'in so small a community as this, so remote, too, from all civilized and advanced society it is not a very easy matter to find persons with the ability and will to become the

²⁸ Tiffen, H. S. in 'NZ Company Settlers' Letters, 1842-43' (Fildes Collection.) Tiffen was later (1860) treasurer of the Hawke's Bay Mechanics' Institute.

²⁹ Earp, G. B. *Wellington Handbook*, 1858, an exact parallel of Forsaith, *A Handbook for Immigrants to N.Z.*, Auckland 1857.

gratuitous instructors of their fellowmen. . . .'³⁰ The following list of lectures and readings selected from programmes of the fifties may be taken as typical:

Hobbes's Theory of Laughter; The Immortality of the Soul; Wool and Woollen Manufacture; Astronomy; The British Colonies; Phrenology; Chemistry; Banking and Currency; Terrestrial Magnetism; Charles Lamb; Electromagnetism; Peasant Proprietors; Astronomical Wonders (illustrated with 'transparencies'); The Air and Atmosphere; Evidence; On What Principles Scenes of Distress Yield Pleasure to the Mind; Origin and Art of Printing; Water and its Constituent Elements; Principles of Construction as Applicable to Timber Architecture; Poetry; Lynch Law; Optics as Applicable to the Illumination of Lighthouses; The Whale; Geology; Hungary and the Hungarians; Photography; The Telescope; Money; Natural History of Man; Ferns; Vocal Part-Singing; The Stock Exchange and its Dealings; The Rise and Progress of the British House of Commons; The Mind and The Consciousness; Life and Times of Sir Robert Peel; Education; Habit; America; People's Delusions; Philosophy of History; Manners and Customs of the Maoris; The Honey Bee; Political Economy; Gothic Architecture; Anatomy and Physiology; Management of Fruit Trees; Cardinal Wolsey; Anatomy and Physiology of the Human Body in Relation to Vital Principle or Electricity; The Composition of Matter; Woman: Her Influence; Geography of the War [Crimean]; Building Societies; Recent French History; The Czar: His Dominions and People; New Zealand Compared with Great Britain in its Physical and Social Aspects; Serious Poems of Thomas Hood; Philosophy of Humbug; The Electric Telegraph; Mineralogy; Fairy Lore; The Mechanical Powers; Phonography [Pitman's Shorthand]; British India; Familiar Geology of the Auckland District; Tenure of Native Land.

If such lectures lacked continuity, the most carping critic could scarcely complain of any lack of variety.³¹ On more than one occasion attempts were made to provide oppor-

³⁰ *Nelson Examiner*, 2 June 1849.

³¹ It is interesting to compare the list with that quoted from Dobbs, pp. 8-9 above. Phrenology and Anti-phrenology appear as subjects in the records of the Leicester Mechanics' Institute.

tunity for continued study of topics introduced in the lectures, but for the most part such efforts had little success. Some of the lectures dealt with matters of great moment at the time. Thus in 1850 Fox's lecture on the British Colonies was so controversial that, despite the great acclamation with which his treatment of the subject was received, it led to a first-class war between the two Wellington newspapers, the *Independent* and the *Spectator*. The two editors abused each other in most unrestrained language, and Fox was accused of using the platform of the Institute to advance his political beliefs, and of sowing dissension among members.

In the main, reports of the lectures indicate that entertainment rather than thirst for knowledge attracted the audience. The versatile Dr. Ralph, a regular lecturer in Wellington, appears to have been capable of making almost any topic attractive. His lecture on *The Whale* attracted 'a very numerous attendance of members and visitors, by whom the Hall of the Institute was well filled, and who by their repeated applause evinced the gratification which the lecture had afforded them'.³² He was equally successful a month later when he dealt with the properties of oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, and carbon. His audience on this occasion 'appeared highly pleased at the manner in which the lecturer treated his subject. . . . The lecture lasted nearly two hours during which the learned gentleman was repeatedly applauded'. Ralph 'was, perhaps, only outdone by R. P. Welch whose treatment of *The Philosophy of Humbug* kept the house in Grimaldic laughter the whole time'.

The annual conversazione of the Wellington Institute was a pleasing mixture of instruction and gaiety. The objects displayed on such occasions furnished 'considerable intellectual enjoyment, and matter for profitable reflection'. A typical description of these gatherings (that of 1851) reads: The meeting was severally addressed by His Honour Mr. Justice Chapman, Mr. R. Hart, and the Rev. Mr. Woodward, who were

³² *New Zealand Spectator*, 5 June 1852.

listened to with the greatest attention and loudly applauded on resuming their seats. Some beautiful glees were sung at intervals by a party of amateurs who had kindly taken the trouble to get them up for the occasion. . . . The refreshments were provided by Mr. Laing, and were of the very best description and afforded general satisfaction. The soiree ended at about 9 o'clock, when the hall was cleared for the dance, and 38 couples remained to trip it away to the merry strains of the Quadrille Band of the 65th Regiment, until an early hour.

On such occasions Dr. Ralph's microscope attracted attention, and a case of stuffed birds had a regular place of honour alongside gold coins, geological specimens, shells, Chinese books, and a stereoscope. The Auckland Mechanics' Institute provided a similar programme on festive occasions, and made a feature of the celebration of the Queen's birthday, when the Institute's flag bearing the slogan 'Knowledge is Power' was a central element in the decorations. Gatherings of this kind occasionally proved an important source of revenue, as much as £40 being taken as door money.

It would be wrong to suggest that thinking people were satisfied with the work of the institutes. In 1861 the following criticism appeared in a newspaper editorial:

Something, however, ought to be done to render the Institute less of a reading-room, and more of a place for the interchange of thought. Lectures delivered once a fortnight during the winter season will never have the effect of guiding public opinion. What is wanted is a literary Chamber of Commerce.³³

If the larger centres had difficulty in keeping up their lecturing programme it may well be imagined that the smaller towns were dependent upon the occasional visit of a Government official or of some other authority to supply them with lecturers. Fox spoke at many of the institutes, Chapman, in the course of his official tours, was much in demand, and at a later date Mr. (later Sir) Robert Stout,

³³ *Southern Cross*, 12 February 1861. The reader may be left to imagine what is meant by 'a literary Chamber of Commerce'.

Mr. Justice Gillies, and the Rev. William Colenso could attract large audiences in many parts of New Zealand. But the regular lectures of the institutes appear to have almost disappeared by the seventies. Other bodies with more specific interests were growing up. The New Zealand Institute provided for those who had serious interest in scientific and philosophical subjects, while those with less specialized tastes found their needs met by the various groups that grew up in association with the churches.

(c) *Libraries.* The third function of the mechanics' institutes—the provision of libraries and reading-rooms—proved their most permanent contribution to the intellectual life of the community. As has been pointed out already, New Zealand colonists were voracious readers from the beginning. There is a considerable amount of evidence to show the care with which books were selected, and the 'advanced' nature of the literature in circulation. (It has been said that in the little settlement of Normanby, with a population of about 200, there were in the eighties at least twenty copies of *The Martyrdom of Man*.) Books could, of course, circulate in areas where classes or lectures were out of the question. But the chief obstacle to the extension of libraries was financial. The usual subscription to the institutes varied from ten shillings to one guinea a year, and a small institute might have an income of about fifty pounds. This source of revenue was in some instances supplemented by grants from the Provincial Governments, but even then the ingenuity of the committees was strained to the utmost in their search for additional funds that would enable them to cater for all tastes. Concerts, bazaars, and an occasional 'benefit' served to keep a roof over the establishment and to provide the pitifully small salary—perhaps six shillings a week—paid to the librarian. Even an occasional windfall from a visiting circus did not always ease the financial burden.

Some of the Provincial Governments had made grants in aid or contributions of books to the institutes. Under the

Public Libraries Act 1869, power had been given to local bodies to rate up to one penny in the pound for the support of free libraries. Direct encouragement to the formation of libraries and mechanics' institutes was given in the *Public Libraries Powers Act* 1875. Clause 2 of this Act provided that 'any number of persons not less than ten, having subscribed or holding together not less than £20 in money or money's worth for their intended institution may make and sign a declaration (in duplicate) of their intention to establish a public library, mechanics' institute or athenaeum, or other similar institution'. Such organizations could obtain some financial assistance under the other acts. Two years later the passing of the *Public Libraries Subsidies Act* provided for the distribution of grants through the Education Boards to public libraries in proportion to population.

The Act of 1877 led to some confusion. The Auckland Education Board made a payment from the allotted moneys to the Mechanics' Institute, at that time the only library of importance in the city. The legality of this payment was challenged by the Government on the ground that the Mechanics' Institute was not a public library within the meaning of the Act. One great difficulty in the administration of the Act of 1877 arose from the fact that the newly created Education Department was unable to obtain accurate and comparable returns from the Boards, so that the procedure of distribution of grants was altered in 1882, from which date claims for subsidy were required to be submitted through the Department.³⁴ It is only from that date onwards that reliable estimates can be made of the number of libraries subsidized.

In 1883 the surprising total of 354 subsidized libraries is recorded; four years later this figure had increased by seven, and a sum of £4,000 was distributed by the Department. By no means all of the 361 libraries were mechanics' institutes and athenaeums, but some of the institutes

³⁴ *A. to J. E.*-9, 1883.

obtained a subsidy by the simple expedient of altering their constitutions so as to throw the reading-room open to all comers without the privilege of removing books. The passing of the *Public Libraries Powers Act* 1875 had encouraged many institutes to register for purposes of subsidy, while a bewildering collection of new bodies was formed under the terms of this Act. An attempt has been made elsewhere to compile a list of these associations.⁸⁵

The cumulative effect of all this legislation was widespread. It is not possible to trace the sums actually paid to separate libraries, but it is certain that in some instances the grant fell to less than £20. This sum, though no doubt a godsend to an institute heavily encumbered with debt, could hardly have provided a wide selection of suitable reading matter. Nevertheless, the Government grant became more and more the determinant of prosperity or poverty. It amounted at times to about one-third of the revenue from other sources, and was at times the only portion of the income that could be expended in the purchase of books. But the effects were out of all proportion to the amount of the grant. For the mechanics' institutes, thus confirmed in the policy they had already adopted, became libraries and little more. Even in 1885 Stout could maintain: 'Generally speaking, the lending of books and keeping open of reading-rooms are the main work performed by these institutions, though they bear different names: in few of them is provision made for lectures and classes. . . . Our mechanics' institutes are . . . mainly libraries.'⁸⁶

The 'hungry eighties' and early nineties dealt harshly with the institutes. So long as the Government grant continued, it was possible to make some annual additions, however inadequate, to the library; but the drying up of this source of revenue between 1887 and 1898, especially when accompanied (as it usually was) by a falling-off in

⁸⁵ See Appendix I.

⁸⁶ *Public Education in New Zealand*, a speech in the House of Representatives, 1885, reprinted as a pamphlet.

subscriptions, led to a loss of interest in many of the smaller libraries if not to their extinction. It is significant that, whereas 361 libraries were aided in 1887, the number had fallen to 285 in 1898, when the grant was reinstated.³⁷ The new grant, less than half that given before the depression, was made only to public libraries and not to libraries controlled by institutions.

A series of causes, therefore, hastened the loss of those features of the mechanics' institutes and athenaeums—the provision of classes and lectures—that had marked them off as agencies of adult education. To remain financially independent was increasingly difficult; to compete with a library established by a municipality was more difficult. The line of least resistance was to become absorbed in the public library of the town. For the name that the institution bore meant little. By the eighties—in fact, if not by virtue of constitution—the institutes were little more than libraries. Other agencies were providing classes, and lectures of the diverse type offered in the hey-day of the institutes could now be arranged by other bodies. The function which they formerly served—that of providing a focus for the social and intellectual life of the community—was now lost. To undertake it they had neither the facilities nor the funds, while the needs of the community were too complicated to be met by the simple structure devised half a century earlier.

Reviewing the history of what may justly be called an educational movement, one has the impression of a borrowed institution transplanted to a soil very different from that of its origin. The institutes came to New Zealand when the English movement was on the wane, and up to a point they repeated the declining stages of the English institutes. Beyond that point local conditions took charge. The situation which gave rise to Birkbeck's experiment—an urge on

³⁷ That the decline was progressive is indicated by figures in the *New Zealand Handbook*, 1892, giving the number of libraries as 298.

the part of uneducated working men to learn from leaders of science the principles behind their trades—was, except in the work of Professor Black in the formation of the Schools of Mines, never duplicated in New Zealand. That is to say, the first phase of the English movement is not represented in this country. But in the isolated New Zealand settlements the institutes served a different but very important purpose. In a very real sense they fulfilled many of the functions of the modern 'community centres', and but for the lack of the term their founders might have called them by that name. They formed a neutral meeting-ground, where on occasion discussion of current affairs reached fever-heat. They provided popular lectures on sciences and the arts, that formed much of the 'sober entertainment' of the Colony. If their accommodation was limited, so that the Governor might at times find difficulty in obtaining entrance, they provided an alternative to the saloon bar and the casino as a place of public assembly. If their committees at times solemnly resolved to exhaust their accumulated funds in the purchase of 'six spittoons and two kerosene lamps', the institutes nevertheless provided lectures on such controversial subjects as evolution before many thousands in England could have heard of the term. The institutes, moreover, were productive in other ways. Many a public institution, many a choral society, and not a few strictly educational classes had their foundation in the meeting-halls of the mechanics' institutes. Schemes for the interchange of books with neighbouring districts, for lending books to outlying areas, for the healthful recreation of youth—these and other schemes, though adumbrated by the institutes, had to wait more than half a century for accomplishment or even national consideration.

The institutes lasted for only thirty or forty years, for local conditions made it impossible for them to continue. In the settlements that had been planned by the New Zealand Company were to be found more than a sprinkling of men who had been educated in the best tradition of the privileged

classes of the nineteenth century. These leaders of intellectual life were young and energetic—they wrote for the innumerable newspapers, held positions of authority in government, looked to the conduct of their own affairs. It was these men who were the mainstay of the early institutes. As they grew older there were few to take their place, and those who might have done so were absorbed in the countless tasks of governing and developing a new land. The institutes quickly exhausted their supply of local talent. In countries nearer the intellectual centres stimulating lecturers could readily be found. The Lyceum movement of America could introduce such giants as Dickens and Thackeray; Ruskin could be induced to lecture to working men in London and elsewhere. If in a more favoured land the institutes declined, it is hardly to be wondered at that the New Zealand institutes could not retain public interest.

CHAPTER III

Many Inventions

1870-1915

* ————— *

DURING the forty years that separated the last stages of the mechanics' institutes from the introduction of the Workers' Educational Association, adult education was no longer centred in a single institution. Instead, it was a by-product of the work of a large number of agencies that sought other ends and were in no way co-ordinated. In attempting to unravel the tangled threads of adult education during this period, one has to consider a number of different movements, each with a character of its own. They did not, of course, exist in isolation, and they cannot be understood apart from the changing social structure of a rapidly developing Colony.

At the beginning of the sixties, after twenty years of colonization, the European population of New Zealand stood at 90,000; in the eighties it passed the half-million mark. The changes taking place in this brief space of two decades, and continuing for some time later, were not merely quantitative: the quality of life was changing with equal rapidity. The discovery of gold and the immigration policy, both of which had brought new types of settlers, the increase in wealth, the growth of industries other than farming, had altered life in a hundred ways. The Maori Wars, which had delayed the

development of the northern settlements, had been brought to an end; the battle for the abolition of the provinces had been fought and won. The foundations of a national system of 'free, secular and compulsory' primary education had been laid; secondary education, though not yet free, and by no means universal, was coming within the reach of a larger proportion of the population; the University of New Zealand had come into being.

The twenty years that saw all these developments were succeeded by a dreary period of depression. Nevertheless, at the end of the century, when prosperity was returning, W. Pember Reeves could paint a striking picture of progress:¹

In 1870 the colonists were without the conveniences and in many cases the comforts of modern civilization. They had scarcely any railways, few telegraphs, insufficient roads, bridges, and harbours. Education was not universal, and the want of recreation and human society was so great as to lead notoriously to drunkenness and coarse debauchery. New Zealand by the end of the century was a pleasant and civilized country.

But generalizations of this kind are likely to be misleading. The development was not an even march of progress—it was rapid here and slower elsewhere. By the end of the century the main settlements had produced cities of considerable size where life became (for many, but not for all) more bearable; and throughout the country communications had increased amazingly. But, as the frontier was pushed further back, there were (particularly in the North Island) sawmilling and farming communities where pioneering conditions, with all their crudeness, were repeated. This differential rate of development has always been a feature of New Zealand life. Even today, despite the effects of radio and better transport, there are isolated communities where social life moves almost at the *tempo* of the sixties.

Politically, there had developed in the seventies a group of colonists that tended to become a ruling class—the

¹ Reeves, W. Pember. *The Long White Cloud*, 243-4. London 1924.

'squattocracy' its opponents called it—that continued in office throughout the greater part of the eighties. This land-holding group was finally ousted by a Liberal government that was to embark on a series of legislative enactments that served to accelerate social change. Culturally, the changes were equally important, but more subtle. The old 'aristocracy of culture' that had existed in the first thirty years of the Colony was becoming less influential; proportionately it was becoming much smaller. The accumulation of wealth gave rise to no great patronage of the arts; the wealth was more often the wealth of self-made men whose interests lay more in the material things of life. Holgate's remark in 1884—'there is no leisured cultured class at present, and everybody is still for the most part intent on making money'²—has remained in substance true in succeeding years.

New Zealand life, then, towards the end of the period to be discussed in this chapter, was not a simple magnification of the life of the early settlements. The isolation that had driven men into community had been broken down; a new settled order of social life had not developed. The period resembles adolescence rather than maturity, and it is as difficult to catch the atmosphere of the moving scene as it is to describe the alternating moods of youth. But it is this changing scene that forms a background to the developments that took place in adult education before 1915.

THE NEW ZEALAND INSTITUTE

Lectures on scientific subjects had formed part of the regular winter programmes of the mechanics' institutes. As the institutes declined towards the end of the century, other bodies with more specialized interests grew up to continue the work that the mechanics' institutes had begun. One of

² Holgate, C. W. *An Account of the Chief Libraries of New Zealand*. London 1886.

the earliest and most important of the new agencies of adult education was the New Zealand Institute, later to become the Royal Society of New Zealand. Scientific societies catering for those whose interest had roots deeper than the search for entertainment had made their appearance in the Colony from at least as early as the fifties. The New Zealand Society, which had come into being in Wellington in 1851, and an offshoot of it in Christchurch—the Philosophical Institute of Canterbury—both languished. In 1865, however, the Exhibition held at Dunedin awakened public interest in a scheme for a 'more general organization for the development of the resources of the Colony'. Two years later, shortly after the establishment of a scientific department of the central Government, the *New Zealand Institute Act* was passed. The Institute itself came into being in 1867 with four branches and a total of 258 members. By the end of the century the number of branches had doubled, and the membership, despite a falling-off during the depression years, stood at about 1,000. Much of the work of the Institute lies beyond the scope of the present study; but throughout its history its various branches have arranged popular lectures, and have provided opportunity for the spread of information on topics ranging from the pure sciences to Maori arts and crafts, and from technical processes to foreign travel. The building up of select libraries on technical subjects and the formation of groups for the continued study of scientific problems are branches of the work of the Institute that have continued through more than three-quarters of a century. In the university centres regular use has been made of the services of members of the university college staffs, while in the provincial towns encouragement has been given to the interests of men and women who might otherwise miss the stimulus that comes from contact with those of like mind.³

³ No attempt is made in these pages to deal with museums, which are controlled by a variety of governing bodies, in a few instances branches of the Royal Society.

OFFSHOOTS OF THE CHURCHES

In the early seventies an observant minister of religion who had spent some years in Napier drew attention to an important feature of life in many of the New Zealand settlements that served to distinguish it from life in a more settled land⁴: 'From the mixed population, too—English, Scottish, Irish, with a sprinkling of other nations—a town of 2,000 people is very different from many a village of the same size in this country, where the inhabitants are all of one sect, pervaded by the same ideas, and half of whom have never been fifty miles from home.' Whereas an English village might have an ancient church and a small chapel, there might be in a New Zealand settlement several meeting-places devoid of any architectural beauty, and serving to dissipate rather than focus the life of the community.⁵ For this and other reasons the cohesion, if not homogeneity, that had marked the early settlements and given a community significance to the work of the mechanics' institutes, was at least temporarily disappearing. The churches, which had from the beginning interested themselves in most phases of education, now began to take an increasingly important part in educational work with adults. If the work was not spectacular according to modern standards, it made itself felt in the community through the positions held by many who were influenced by it.

Not the least important of the means adopted by the churches in the education of adults was the formation of some kind of Young Men's Mutual Improvement Society, giving opportunities for debates, essays, occasional lectures, and the compilation of a 'journal'. The name 'mutual improvement society' dates back, in England, at least to the

⁴ Barclay, P. *Notes on New Zealand*. London 1872. His remarks are addressed to a British audience.

⁵ This is true in many areas today. Somerset in *Littledene* found that in an area populated by 1800 people ten denominations were at work.

eighteenth century, and has meant different things at different times. Some of the earliest efforts at adult education made by working men had taken place in such spontaneously formed groups; at a later period societies of this kind carried on the study of political ideas.

Like so many imported institutions the mutual improvement societies that sprang up in New Zealand were less virile than their English prototypes, and often differed little, either in aims or methods, from the literary and debating societies of a later date, except that the members laid themselves out to improve one another rather more consciously and remorselessly than has since been customary, 'criticising one another's pronunciation, grammar, and deportment with devastating candour'.⁶ In Auckland there were, for the last thirty years of the century, several such societies attached to the various churches, and at least one of them had a continuous existence until about 1920. Though connected with the churches, the societies drew their membership from many who had little attachment to any particular church.

The Auckland Athenaeum Literary and Debating Society (1878-1906) illustrates in its history many features of this phase of adult education. It arose out of the Wellesley Street Baptist Young Men's Mutual Improvement Class which, when the church moved to new quarters, became the Tabernacle Literary Society. In this form it rapidly attracted a large following and became one of the leading literary societies of the city. Unfortunately it incurred the displeasure of the Tabernacle authorities, for, in a debate on the subject of theatre-going, a large majority decided that educational advantage was to be obtained from attendance at good theatrical performances. This finding, the Church authorities decided, was not in accordance with the principles of the Church, and they decreed that in future the Society should submit its programme to the deacons for approval. The Society, not being prepared to accept this ultimatum, moved

⁶ For much of the information here the author is indebted to former members of such societies, notably Messrs. M. Aldis, F. M. Halls, and T. U. Wells.

out of the Church and changed its name to The Athenaeum Literary and Debating Society. During its thirty years of activity it attracted to its membership many who later became leading figures in Auckland life.⁷

In the nineties the many literary and debating societies in the city and suburbs of Auckland united to form a 'Union Parliament' to which the affiliated societies sent representatives on the basis of one for every twenty members. The 'Parliament', which owed its existence largely to the efforts of Percy Dix, afterwards well-known as an entrepreneur in the theatrical and musical world, met fortnightly in the old YMCA building. Here, before a crowded gallery, the members, under the leadership of C. E. Button, himself an ex-member of parliament, debated most of the important political questions of the day—old-age pensions, women's suffrage, reform of the land laws, and single tax. In most of these matters the Union was ahead of legislation. So divided was opinion that no ministry succeeded in holding office for more than a few months. In few periods of the history of Auckland can there have been such lively and intelligent debating, for these were no mere academic discussions; they served to inform a very large number of people of the arguments for and against proposals of considerable moment. Further than that, the Union provided a training ground for men who were later to occupy positions of importance in civic and national life. In its prime the Union Parliament had as many as eighty members, so that in Auckland alone membership of literary and debating societies must have reached over 1600, but by 1896 it was losing its popularity and it lasted for only a few years longer.

Why, then, did the debating societies which had reached such large proportions so quickly decline? Three main causes have been suggested. First, when most of the reforms

⁷ Examples are (Sir) James Parr, Messrs. M. Aldis, F. M. Hills, F. Hutchinson, W. B. Leyland, J. R. Rendell, E. Earle Vale, and T. U. Wells. Among the many causes that led to the final dissolution of the society was the opening of the Leys Institute, to which many of its members transferred.

so enthusiastically debated had become law during the Seddon regime, there was a falling off of interest; second, the institution of technical evening classes and the development of the university colleges opened up opportunities for educational advancement that had previously been lacking; and third (in the present century), the coming of the motor cycle, the motor car, the cinema, and the radio, with the accompanying 'lure of pleasure', made such associations as mutual improvement societies and literary and debating societies seem rather 'stuffy' and Victorian. Even in the nineties the term 'mutual improvement' smacked of the village pump.

There are natural limits to the success of mutual improvement societies. In isolated settlements like Kati Kati, or among the more serious-minded of the diggers on the goldfields, they may have served to mitigate the rawness of 'backblock' life. But without the stimulus of new ideas and the contribution of new personalities their decay and final dissolution are almost inevitable. Few people have the intellectual resources that enable them indefinitely to contribute new ideas. Lacking an influx of new personalities or stimulus from without, mutual improvement societies may follow one of two courses: they may disintegrate through dissension, like the Richmond Street Literary Society of Thames that lasted for only two seasons; worse still, they may all too often become mutual admiration societies whose death may be dignified and lingering though none the less certain. It is one of the problems of adult education to find means of providing continued stimulus for such groups. In the nineties the mutual improvement societies were failing to enlist new recruits from among the young men—perhaps a symptom of the growing gap between youth and age that the present century has served only to widen.

Limits of a different kind are imposed on such societies when they are attached to churches. Here they depend for

their success largely on the enthusiasm of the incumbent of the parish or charge. The removal or transfer of such an individual may lead to the disintegration of the group. In the period under discussion church authorities here and there caught some vision of the educational possibilities of clubs and societies of the mutual-improvement type; others, with a more limited outlook, who thought of the clubs mainly as a means of increasing church attendance, in their very impatience to achieve that end were apt to scare off the cautious and antagonize the suspicious. Then, as now, success in adult education required qualities of mind and personality not always found in people of high attainment in other directions. At the same time, the contribution of the churches in the field of general adult education during the period from about 1880 to 1910, as in the earlier period, was considerable. It is even probable that, with certain exceptions, the churches have not yet regained the level of adult educational work that they attained at that time.

THE TEMPERANCE MOVEMENT AND ITS EFFECTS

The influence of the churches was also exerted through the temperance societies. Temperance associations of one kind or another, and the temperance lodges, had been in existence, not without cause, from the earliest days of the Colony. In 1842 the temperance movement had established itself in districts as far apart as Wellington, Nelson, Auckland, and Hokianga; twenty years later, Bands of Hope made their appearance, while in the late seventies the movement received the official sponsorship of the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches. Though much of their work might be classed as propaganda, the more active of the Bands of Hope set about the task of providing attractive leisure-time occupations and cultural opportunities. Readings, debates, discussions, and a training in public speaking were their

staple fare, and they attracted to their membership many who later became leaders in New Zealand life.⁸

For the greater part of the nineteenth century the records of agencies of adult education are concerned mainly with the doings of men. Occasional newspaper references are made to the presence of the 'fairer sex' at lectures and soirees, and women naturally took part in the concerts and balls that are described in such detail in the contemporary press. But social restrictions still pressed heavily on women. In 1876, for instance, a German lady who visited the Colony records that in Christchurch she was not allowed to go unescorted to the dining-room of the hotel in which she was a guest, and had her meals sent up to her room; in Wellington she found it necessary to remain on the ship, where she was the only woman passenger.⁹ Twenty years later, the franchise had been granted to women. But eight years of this privilege did not produce any very great change, for Siegfried reminds us that 'the only women who vote with personal and reasoned conviction are, in short, those who may be styled intellectuals: graduates of the universities, the teaching body, publicists, philanthropists, and also many women who are enabled by the leisure of widowhood or celibacy to busy themselves with political questions'.¹⁰

It was out of the temperance movement, however, that there arose some of the most important of the women's organizations during the period under consideration. The Women's Christian Temperance Union, an offshoot of an organization founded in Cleveland, Ohio, in the seventies, was established in New Zealand in 1885 and spread throughout the country. In the second year of its existence there

⁸ For a full account of this movement see Dash, G. *No License Handbook* (1908) and Cocker, J. *Temperance and Prohibition in New Zealand* (London 1930). Among those who became leaders in the movement were Sir George Fowlds, Messrs. T. E. Taylor and H. D. Bedford.

⁹ *Notes on a Tour Through Various Parts of New Zealand*, by a German Lady. Sydney 1877.

¹⁰ *Democracy in New Zealand*, English translation 1914. (French edition; 1904.)

were fifteen branches, while in 1908 there were fifty. The work of the WCTU was much wider than that implied in its primary object, the abolition of the liquor traffic. The Union became a powerful factor in the women's franchise movement, and was in part responsible for the formation of the Women's Franchise Leagues. There were fourteen of these leagues in 1897. The Women's Social and Political League of Wellington aimed at 'the promotion of knowledge amongst the women of the Colony with respect to social, political, municipal and other questions affecting their well-being'.¹¹

Even though it is possible to over-estimate the political importance of the franchise movement, it remains true that the educational work of the early women's institutes that flourished in the nineties was very great indeed. These institutes are not directly connected with the similarly named organizations of country women that came into being at a later date, and were, perhaps, more political in flavour. It was at the instance of Mrs. Wells, secretary of the Canterbury Women's Institute, that a convention of representatives of feminist societies met at Christchurch to constitute the National Council of Women of New Zealand. Within three years of its formation the Council sought affiliation with the International Council of Women. The National Council retained its vigour for only six years and was not revived again until the later years of the first world war.

The fate of these women's organizations is an excellent illustration of the phrase 'success kills'. So long as 'sweating' was a serious problem in industry, and the rights of women a live subject, organizations with fairly definite aims could retain the loyalty of members. All human beings thrive on struggle; it is easy to form associations when the road is hard. But when the purpose of an association is achieved, it is in danger of death. This is as true of political parties

¹¹ For a brief account, see Simpson, Helen M. *The Women of New Zealand*. Wellington 1940.

as it was of the women's movement of the nineties. Adult education in New Zealand provides many texts for such a sermon. The last stage in the decay of associations in democracy arrives when they have 'all this and Heaven, too'.

THE YMCA AND YWCA

The religious and philanthropic motive in adult education during this period is illustrated, too, in the growth of the two important associations—the Young Men's and the Young Women's Christian Associations. The YMCA, founded in London in 1844, was established in this country some ten years later. Indeed, it is claimed that the Auckland YMCA was one of the first such Associations founded outside England. The need for healthy leisure-time occupations for young men in the rapidly growing towns was indeed great, and this need was largely met by the YMCA. While the main emphasis was at first on strengthening the religious life of youth, educational work—mainly the organization of lectures and classes—had formed part of the regular programme, both in Auckland and Dunedin, from at least the sixties. The Auckland Association had a reading-room, a circulating and reference library, and provision for the serving of light refreshments. By 1913 the scope of the work had increased considerably: junior branches had been formed, sports clubs were flourishing, hostels had been opened, and the Association's buildings had become the centres of busy social life. Like the mechanics' institutes before them, the clubrooms of the YMCA formed convenient meeting-places for debating and discussion groups, while the Association itself formed educational classes of one kind and another. As with the parent body in England, the activities of the New Zealand YMCA had broadened during forty years of existence, and it was becoming a national institution, discovering and supplying new needs in new ways.

The YWCA had its foundation in Dunedin in 1878 and in Auckland some time later, when concern was being felt for the plight of girl immigrants who arrived in seaport towns friendless and homeless. To help them, and to promote the religious life of young women generally, were the two primary objects of the associations from which the YWCA eventually developed.¹² In the early days of its history the YWCA engaged in a wide variety of philanthropic work, arranging for visits to prisons, factories, and mission schools, and did much to help the poor and the sick. Similar Associations grew up in Christchurch (1901) and Wellington (1906), while in 1907 the New Zealand branches joined with Australian Associations in an Australasian National Association. This link was retained until 1926, when the New Zealand YWCA became an autonomous national organization. During the eighties the movement grew very rapidly. In Dunedin, in 1893, there were more than 500 members, and twenty years later the Auckland Association had a membership of over 1000 and was then the largest YWCA in the Southern Hemisphere. In the days of immigration and during the depression of the eighties, the religious and philanthropic work received most emphasis. From 1907, however, new ideas and new methods were introduced. The Association still continued to help in the establishment of immigrants (acting with the Girls' Friendly Society as one of the chief reception agencies), and it still conducted its religious work; but, with better accommodation and a wider outlook, it found new work to do and established new branches. Educational classes, begun in Dunedin in 1912, had by 1913 an enrolment of more than 150 students for the study of such subjects as literature, English, elocution, dressmaking, millinery, and physical culture. In the same year the Christchurch branch had more than 70 young women attending weekly classes in similar subjects. Club

¹² The Auckland Association was known as the Ladies' Christian Association until the arrival of the Rev. J. S. Hill and his wife in 1885. They persuaded members of the association to link up with the YWCA.

facilities became more important as women began to take an increasing place in the world of business and industry, and luncheon clubs, recreational clubs, and keep-fit classes have played an increasing part in the programme of the YWCA.¹³ From 1912 onwards there were developed such organizations as the All Round Clubs (particularly in Auckland and Wellington) and the Hearth Fire Girls, groups with a definite interest in home-making. Unlike many of the associations formed at this time, the YMCA and the YWCA have shown adaptability to changing needs; in consequence their importance has increased instead of diminishing.

LIBRARIES AND THEIR EXTENSION

It has already been noted that many of the mechanics' institutes were absorbed in the public libraries that grew up under the encouragement of the Libraries Acts in the last quarter of the century. By 1900, despite the effects of the depression, the public libraries in the main centres were making some progress, though the quality of some of the reading material may be judged by a list of popular authors given in the Wellington Library Report of 1899. The list includes Guy Boothby, Marie Corelli (who had fallen from first to third place), Mrs. Henry Wood, Mrs. Braddon (formerly second), Baring Gould, and Conan Doyle.¹⁴ The difficulties of financing libraries at the time were very great, but there can be little doubt that a decline in standards of library buying had set in at the end of the century.

One of the most notable events in library history, how-

¹³ See *Outline Sketch of the Y.W.C.A. in Australasia* (Sydney 1913); and *Association Chronicles*, W.Y.W.C.A. (London 1936.)

¹⁴ This is perhaps not typical, since Holgate, speaking of the Auckland Library, quotes the *New Zealand Herald* of 1885 as follows: 'The most popular section of the library is that which comprises such subjects as architecture, agriculture, botany, geology, chemistry, engineering, mining, mechanics, manufactures, painting, engraving, etc.' The library was visited by 600 people daily on weekdays and over 300 on Sundays.

ever, had occurred in 1883, when Sir George Grey presented to the City of Auckland his magnificent library of eight thousand volumes comprising many rare and valuable works of reference. That Grey had serious motives in making his gift is evident from the speech which he delivered at a public function held to commemorate the occasion. In this he spoke of Auckland as destined to become a centre from which 'to flood the Pacific with learning, and to dominate with a just and righteous supremacy—not of tyranny but of intellect—over the great extent of islands which surround'.

To Wellington goes the honour of pioneering an important experiment. After the opening of the South Wellington Library (Newtown) in 1902 the Library Committee arranged fortnightly lectures during the winter months. For a number of years these lecture courses were continued, and relied not only on local speakers, but on visiting lecturers from abroad. A similar scheme was for some time in operation in connection with the Central Library, the lectures being held in the Town Hall.

The foundation of what may be called an 'educational centre' in Ponsonby, a suburb of Auckland, though not part of any definite movement, is worth passing notice. This was the Leys Institute, founded under the terms of the will of William Leys, who died in 1899. The funds available being insufficient to meet the cost of the enterprise, the testator's brother, T. W. Leys, offered to defray one-half of the entire cost of erecting and equipping a building, and to furnish it with a library, on condition that the City Corporation provided a suitable site. The building, erected at a cost of about £3,000, was opened in 1905. Additions were made from time to time, and for the best part of twenty years it acted not only as a library, but as a meeting-place for various literary, dramatic, musical, and debating clubs, as well as for sports and gymnastic organizations. Regular winter courses of lectures and entertainments were organized and for a time well attended. The library, however, tended to become the

most important feature of the work of the Institute; the broader educational activities, with the exception of gymnastic classes, have not in recent years attained the vitality they possessed prior to 1914.

Winter courses of lectures were for some years arranged in the suburban libraries of Auckland on lines similar to those already mentioned. For this work the present Chief Librarian, John Barr, was mainly responsible. Doubtless work of a similar kind was arranged in other centres. Though serving a need at the time, and having educational aims, the lectures fell mainly into the category of entertainment. Like those of the mechanics' institutes of earlier days, they possessed little continuity, and the amount of effort required of those who attended was negligible. It is no reflection on those responsible for such schemes to place their results on the borderline of adult education.

TECHNICAL AND HIGHER EDUCATION

The period under review saw the beginning of technical education. In the two decades before 1895 the idea of technical and continuation work of a more or less vocational nature had been taking definite shape. Nicol¹⁵ has traced the history of this movement, from the early work of the mechanics' institutes and such bodies as the Dunedin and Timaru Caledonian societies, through the establishment of schools of art in Otago (1870), Wellington (1885), and Auckland (1890), the Technical Classes Association in Dunedin (1889), and a similar association in Auckland a few years later. The establishment of the Schools of Mines in the eighties, which owed much to Professor J. G. Black, of Otago University, marked an important step in a similar direction. The *Manual and Technical Instruction Act* 1900, like its predecessor of 1895, gave fairly wide scope for continued education, and provided opportunity for some

¹⁵ *Op. cit.*

whose education had been defective, or who sought vocational advancement through improved qualifications. The effect of the establishment of evening classes has already been noted.

Organized university extension work, which played an important part in English adult education from 1873 onwards, has no real parallel in this country during the years prior to the first world war. The Board of Governors of Canterbury College, at the instigation of the Rev. R. A. Woodthorpe, set up an Extension Council in 1901. It was planned to appoint a permanent secretary, to set up local committees, and to organize lectures. Fees were fixed at £21 for a course of six lectures or £40 for twelve, exclusive of the lecturer's travelling expenses, and were to be paid by the local committee in advance. By the end of the year it was obvious that the scheme was doomed to failure, since no response had been received from the district. A proposal of the Wanganui Education Board that lectures should be provided in districts where there was no university college came up for discussion in the Senate some six years later, but, though the request was referred to the affiliated colleges, no action appears to have been taken.¹⁶ For the failure of the colleges to develop extension work there were very good reasons. The four teaching colleges, which had been founded at various dates before 1900, were for the most part not so much well-endowed seats of learning as pioneering institutions working under incredible difficulties, and the heavy demands made on the staffs in the course of their normal duties left little time for the organized extension of university work in a broader field. Nevertheless, throughout the history of most of the colleges, university teachers have lectured to public audiences and to many professional societies in need of assistance. That the early professors played a very important part in the life of the community is a tribute at once to their enthusiasm and to their ability.

¹⁶ *Minutes of Senate* 1907, Par. 40.

THE POLITICAL MOTIVE

In the confused currents of adult education so far sketched in this chapter, religion and philanthropy account for a good deal. It is not easy to say how far the mutual improvement societies had serious educational aims, and how far they gave opportunity mainly for sociability. In a sense what adult education there was touched symptoms rather than causes; it sought to give opportunity for discussion, without providing the foundation of connected study on which discussion might be based. It was not until the end of the period considered here that the YWCA, for instance, produced a clearly-defined educational programme. Apart from the development of technical education, the scientific motive is equally confused. What, then, of the third motive that has traditionally been evident in adult education—the political motive? Anyone acquainted with New Zealand only through the advanced legislation of the Seddon period might reasonably look for some endeavour in adult education in the ranks of organized labour at that time. If he made the search, he would be disappointed. Workers' education scarcely existed until the inauguration of the Workers' Educational Association at a later date.

The reasons for this situation are not hard to find. In the first place, much of the 'advanced' legislation, like the movement towards 'State socialism', resulted from expediency rather than from conscious application of social philosophy. State ownership, in particular, was the outcome of necessity rather than careful planning, and had been implicit in much of the legislation passed before the more spectacular achievements of the nineties. The legislation that established New Zealand's reputation as a social laboratory is better regarded as a series of attempts to meet concrete problems than as an expression of doctrinaire concepts. Neither Ballance nor Seddon could be called socialists in any Marxian or even

Utopian sense of the term. Of Seddon, one who held office in his Government has written:

Seddon was not encumbered with either theories or ideals. If you had spoken to him of Utopia, he would have asked where it was. On being told that it was 'nowhere', he would have sharply answered that he had no intention of going in that direction. I never knew him read a socialist book, though he did things that Socialists noted and admired, doing them as they came into his day's work. His sympathy with the people was undoubted; his ideas he picked up as he went along.¹⁷

Even the first 'labour' candidates elected to parliament in 1890 were far from entertaining dreams of a radically new social order, and a contemporary description of their work praises them on that account:

To achieve some purely practical benefit for those who sent them to Parliament was the goal at which they constantly aimed, and as a result of a persistent, dogged perseverance, the statute books of the Colony are fairly rich in remedial measures for the evils which threatened to undermine the comfort and happiness of the workers' social and industrial life.¹⁸

Socialist thought of a militant variety scarcely made its appearance in New Zealand until about 1906.

This does not mean, however, that there was any lack of experiment in the organization of labour during this period. Though technically illegal until 1878, trades unions, mainly craft unions registered as friendly societies, had made a sporadic appearance before the eighties. It is probable that the discovery of gold, and the immense changes in social life resulting from that discovery, had postponed the regular development of unionism. Indeed, the need for national organization on anything like a comprehensive scale hardly existed. But when in 1879 good times were suddenly succeeded by bad, when wages fell, and the horrible twin spectres of sweating and unemployment began to haunt

¹⁷ Reeves, *op. cit.*, 301.

¹⁸ Quoted by Paul, J. T., *Landmarks in the History of New Zealand Labour Politics*, a lecture to the Historical Section of the Otago Branch of the Royal Society of New Zealand, 1936.

men's minds, the stage was set for a more thorough organization of labour. 'In the early eighties . . . trade union organization was proceeding apace. In the late eighties it was booming.'¹⁹ It has been estimated that trade union members numbered 20,000 in January, 1890; it has even been maintained²⁰ that by the end of the year the number had risen to 60,000 out of a total population of 600,000.

Just when the edifice of unionism appeared to be solidly founded there occurred (in 1890) the shipping strike, conducted by the Maritime Council that had been formed in the previous year. This strike, a sympathy strike so far as New Zealand was concerned, dragged on for three months and was decisively beaten. The structure so enthusiastically built collapsed overnight and unionism was not to revive again for another ten years, when, under the stimulus of the *Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act*, there was a steady development. In 1906 the membership figure had crept up to almost 35,000.

Defeated in the industrial field, the leaders of the labour movement concentrated on achieving the betterment of conditions through political organization. Here they met with better success. The original *Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act* of 1894, and the better times that began some two years later, provided a brief respite from industrial discontent, while a sympathetic Government continued for a further ten years to provide some degree of satisfaction. With the abolition of plural voting in 1890, the 'labour vote', though suffering some vicissitudes of fortune, was now a force to be reckoned with, while the alliance of Liberal and Labour interests for a time proved a happy union. There was, however, a growing desire on the part of organized labour for political independence. The annual conference of

¹⁹ Paul, J. T. *Labour Landmarks*, 15. Dunedin n.d.

²⁰ This estimate (60,000) is quoted by Irvine, F. M. Jean, 'The Revolt of the Militant Unions' (unpublished thesis, 1937). Irvine's figures are probably on the high side and can hardly refer to members of registered unions. See *Research Bulletin*, Vol. IV, No. 1, 1944, of the New Zealand Federation of Labour.

the Trades and Labour Councils in 1904 proceeded with the formation of an independent party, where six years before such a step had merely been declared desirable. For the next ten years there occurred in the organization of political labour a series of moves and counter-moves, culminating in the Unity Conference of 1913.

Although the details of the rise of independent labour do not concern the present study, it is necessary to notice the changed tone of thought in organized labour during the early years of the present century. If, as was suggested previously, politicians of the nineties gave little evidence of socialist theory, it was nevertheless true that, from the beginning of the settlements, there had been many who sought in New Zealand a form of social life that would be different from that of the Old World. There had been keen critics of British colonial policy, there had been some who had suffered from the depression of the 'Hungry Forties'; there were others who had been inveterate espousers of lost causes. Intellectuals and disillusioned Chartists had done something to alter the mental atmosphere of the Colony; but that influence was too subtle, too confused with practical means of achieving practical ends, to be clearly discerned. Now and again, it is true, a more clearly defined current may be detected in the broad stream. In 1887, for instance, an American named Lyght had organized chapters of the Knights of Labour, a secret society suspected of revolutionary tendencies, and ten years later there were men in the labour movement who proudly proclaimed themselves members of this organization; but it is doubtful whether they ever developed to any extent the educational aims that the parent body in America had formulated in the seventies.²¹ About 1900 there came to New Zealand a

²¹ Little record appears to exist concerning the Knights of Labour in this country. They organized a strike among timber workers in North Auckland. (Stallworthy, John. *Early Northern Wairoa*. Dargaville 1916.) The Auckland University College library contains a reprint of an address by H. W. Farnall on 'The Industrial Depression in New Zealand: Its Cause and Only Cure' delivered to the Knights of Labour in Auckland in January 1890.

number of 'Clarionettes', followers of Robert Blatchford, whose social programme as outlined in *Merrie England*, *Britain for the British*, and *God and My Neighbour*, has been described as 'half atheist, half revolutionary socialist'. The Clarionettes had hoped to find in this country a socialist Utopia, and had contemplated the founding of a settlement based on socialist principles. Finding that the realities differed somewhat from their hopes, the band became dispersed. Their influence, however, was considerable, and they endeavoured to carry on 'educational' work in the socialist cause.

In 1901 the Socialist Party of New Zealand was formed in Auckland with thirty-three members. Only one of these was a New Zealander, the rest being either Clarionettes or recent arrivals from Australia. One of the founders of this body has said, 'The real educational work now started: Marx, Engels, Proudhon, Haeckel, and other continental writers; Blatchford and other English writers; the American *Appeal to Reason*; the Australian and English socialist papers—all helped to illuminate the mental darkness of the New Zealand workers.'²² A branch of the Revolutionary Socialists was formed in Wellington about 1904, and a tailor named F. P. Cooke founded a branch in Christchurch. The movement spread to Dennistown and other parts of the West Coast.²³

It would be easy to describe all this as propaganda, and indeed a good deal of it was. At the same time, this appears to be the earliest attempt at what has sometimes been called 'political education' of the working classes. Lectures were held in Hokianga, Waihi, Karangahake, and Thames as well as in the main centres, and a considerable quantity of 'left wing' literature was sold. The books and pamphlets so distributed dealt not only with socialism and communism,

²² Robert F. Way in a letter to the author.

²³ The material here has been gathered from various sources, including unpublished theses by R. F. Paddock and F. M. Jean Irvine in the library of Auckland University College.

but also with physics, biology, and religion. Men like Bert Johnson spent their days peddling printed matter in the northern mining centres, and a bookstall selling socialist and rationalist literature was opened in Auckland.

Even more aggressive was the campaign on the West Coast. In 1906 P. Hickey, a New Zealand miner, returned from the United States the proud possessor of a ticket of membership of the Western Federation of Miners. The Federation was connected with the IWW, which had been founded in Chicago shortly after the Colorado strike, and had a militant platform for the organization of workers. Arriving in this country, Hickey quickly made himself known as a 'zealous apostle of socialist, industrial unionist, and IWW doctrine'. He and an equally enthusiastic young Australian miner, P. C. Webb, who had recently come to the West Coast, organized a local branch of the New Zealand Socialist Party. In his *Red Fed Memories*, Hickey describes the functioning of this campaign, and claims that, for the first time in the history of the West Coast, the doctrine of bigger unionism was made known.²⁴ The leaders of this militant movement were mainly Australians. In addition to those already mentioned there were Robert Semple, W. E. Parry, Mark Fagan, M. J. Savage, and later R. S. Ross and H. E. Holland.

The upshot of the agitation on the West Coast was the formation of the Miners' Federation of Labour in 1907. Thus by about 1912 the Labour movement was confused and spoke with two voices. On the one hand was the more 'orthodox' United Labour Party, in which was incorporated the Trades and Labour Council's Federation of Labour; on the other was the Federation of Labour which had arisen out of the Miner's Federation, with a decidedly militant platform. Both these groups imported lecturers to make their objects known. The 'right wing' was represented by the

²⁴ The Miners' Federation [of Labour] became the Federation of Labour, and is to be distinguished from a body of similar name formed earlier by the Trades and Labour Council.

mysterious 'Professor' Walter Thomas Mills of Milwaukee, who played an important part in the negotiations that led to the union of the two 'wings'; the 'left' introduced a number of speakers, the most important being Scott Bennett, who was later described as 'the greatest influence in moulding thought and sentiment during the past three or four years'. When reconciliation was at last achieved in 1913, a division of function was agreed upon: industrial organization was undertaken by the United Federation of Labour, while political organization was the concern of the Social Democratic Party. In 1916 the name of the latter was changed to the New Zealand Labour Party.

It is therefore clear that by 1914 the working-class movement was a reality, and a very different thing from the Liberal-Labour movement of little more than twenty years earlier. If in 1889 'everyone was reading collectivist tracts and listening to altruistic sermons'²⁵, by 1914 there were at least a few who had a more militant view of social change and read a different type of literature to more purpose; for as a result of changing conditions, and the zealous though limited propagation of Marxian theory, there had come into being a group, small in number but very influential, not easily to be convinced that the interests of the working class could be furthered by the benign efforts of liberal politicians. There were, too, among the leaders and even the rank and file of organized labour, many who were ready to seize every opportunity to prepare themselves for political life. 'The need for workers' education may not have been fully realized; but the stage was set for the revealing of that need.

²⁵ Reeves, W. Pember. *State Experiments in Australia and New Zealand*. London 1902.

CHAPTER IV

Missionary Enterprise

1915-20

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It is sometimes held that adult education consists in meeting expressed needs. This crude view of supply and demand, however applicable it may be to other fields of social activity, certainly does not apply to adult education. For demands of this kind rarely, if ever, arise spontaneously. What usually happens is that some person or agency succeeds in demonstrating a need and, having done so, proceeds to show how it may be met. For this reason the extension of adult education has in most cases been the result of a faith, a conviction, an urge to show what might be—in short, of missionary enterprise.

The truth of this general principle is well illustrated in the foundation of the Workers' Educational Association in this country in the early months of 1915. 'When Messrs. Atkinson and Stewart walked in among us,' reads the first report from the Invercargill Branch, 'not ten in our town knew whence or why they came: when they walked out the following afternoon, the Workers' Educational Association of Invercargill was an accomplished fact.' What was true of Invercargill was in varying degree true of the other centres. In the university cities some preliminary negotiations had, of course, taken place; indeed, ironically enough, it was

mainly the occurrence of a shipping strike that had prevented the establishment of workers' education from taking place some eighteen months earlier. Late in 1913 Albert Mansbridge, founder of the English movement, had visited Auckland with the intention of continuing in New Zealand the strenuous work he had undertaken at the request of the Australian universities. The Australian tour had been a very great success.¹ Mansbridge, then a man in his middle thirties, had, in collaboration with representatives of the labour movement and the university authorities, addressed 120 meetings and, kindling in others some of his own enthusiasm, had been instrumental in establishing the WEA in most of the Australian states. Never a man of robust health, he was feeling the strain of the tour, and the transport difficulties already mentioned led him to curtail his New Zealand visit to two days, during which, however, he found time to meet some members of the Auckland University College staff and a few others who later took a prominent part in the movement.

By the middle of 1914 a few isolated experiments had been made in the formation of classes on tutorial lines. In Christchurch a class conducted by a high-school master, Mr. (now Archdeacon) L. G. Whitehead, had grown out of a group organized by the Socialist Party. In Auckland preliminary discussion had taken place concerning the formation of WEA classes, while an approach had been made to the Minister of Education, who had promised Cabinet consideration of possible support.² But, apart from these efforts, little was known of the WEA among either the university authorities or organized labour until the visit early in 1915 of Meredith Atkinson, recently appointed Director of Tutorial Classes in Sydney University, and David Stewart, Secretary of the New South Wales branch of the WEA.

¹ See Mansbridge, Albert, *The Trodden Road* (London 1940), and *An Adventure in Working-Class Education* (London 1920).

² *Auckland Star*, 27 June 1914.

The Workers' Educational Association, of which these two men were the apostles, was in large part the creation of Albert Mansbridge—the outcome of a religious faith in the dignity and destiny of man, coupled with a belief in the efficacy of adult education. For Mansbridge life was an adventure (to use his own metaphor), and no small part of life was education. 'Adult education,' he has written, 'is really an appeal to all, but it must not miss working men and women of all types, who must express their desires for anything reasonable. It is not merely for "culture" in the narrow sense; every legitimate activity of man is material upon which it must work.'³ And again: 'Every living person is potentially a student, although not necessarily in the technical sense of the word.'⁴ Like Grundtvig, the founder of the Danish Folk High Schools, he realized that men and women who had been out in the world for some years were capable of learning many things that could not be taught to young people in school. 'In my own case,' he says in his autobiography, 'I am not sure that an early entry into work harmed me. Still, I am convinced that the boy (or girl) who possesses ability should continue whole-time education so long as is possible, but I suspect that many who go on to the universities would have been better and more successful men if they had gone earlier to work, whether in field, workshop, or office.'⁵ Adult education, as he saw it, was not simply a means of making up for lost opportunity—it was qualitatively different from school education.

But Mansbridge was not only a visionary in the better sense of the word; he was also an organizer of ability. His early association with the co-operative movement had given him a sympathy for working men and women, and an understanding of their half-realized aspirations. Earlier plans for the education of workers, he believed, had failed for one of two reasons—either they were imposed from

³ In a letter to the author.

⁴ *An Adventure in Working-Class Education*, xvi.

⁵ *The Trodden Road*, 236.

above by well-meaning philanthropists, or they had suffered from lack of expert direction and contact with the more formal agencies of higher education. He believed, too, that, at the opening of the twentieth century, working men 'had, in the main, proved unresponsive, and would continue to be unresponsive, to facilities devised for them by other people, in however alluring terms they were presented'. The solution of the problem of workers' education lay in seeking the help of both university men and workers in inspiring a demand for education. In particular it was necessary to bring together the trade unions, the co-operative movement, and the universities in some form of united effort. The first public expression of such views occurs in an address delivered by Mansbridge at the Congress of the Co-operative Movement in 1899.

It was in 1903, however, that the scheme took definite shape. Mansbridge was at that time employed as a cashier in the Co-operative Permanent Building Society, and had for some years spent much of his spare time in educational work. A group of working men who met in his house in London had formed a Christian Economic Society. Assured of their assistance and of that of Dr. Holland Rose, Mansbridge and his wife decided to take action by becoming the first two members of 'an Association to promote the higher education of working men primarily by the extension of university teaching; also by (1) development of an efficient school continuation system; (2) the assistance of working-class efforts of a specifically educational character'. Some months later a provisional committee, consisting of co-operators and trade unionists, met for the first time in Toynbee Hall. At a conference held at Oxford in August, 1903, the Association received recognition from representatives of nearly all the universities and a large number of labour organizations.

The drive and sincerity displayed by Mansbridge, together with the enthusiasm he was able to kindle, so

completely wore down the opposition encountered from 'left-wingers' in organized labour that by 1906 the movement had spread to most parts of England and Wales. Thirteen branches had been established and district areas had been defined, giving a large measure of autonomy; affiliated societies numbered 283, and individual members 2,612; the name of the organization had been changed to the Workers' Educational Association.

The objects and methods of the WEA were now set out in constitutional form. As 'a co-ordinating federation of working-class and educational interests' it aimed at promoting the higher education of working men and women by arousing the interest of workers and directing attention to facilities already existing, by discovering needs and representing them to the Board of Education and to educational institutions, by providing facilities for study either in conjunction with educational bodies or otherwise, and by publishing reports, pamphlets, books, and magazines. The WEA, therefore, was, and has remained, a body concerned with a much wider field than that occupied by classes and lectures. Even in the early days of its existence it had made its voice heard on many problems of general education; throughout its history the English WEA has consistently advocated extension of educational opportunity for boys and girls. At the same time, one of the greatest contributions of the WEA to adult education has been the development (if not invention) of tutorial classes. Since it was this feature of the Association's work that received special attention when the movement was first established in New Zealand, it is necessary to examine in some detail the objects that the tutorial classes sought to achieve.

The idea of tutorial classes appears to have been suggested in 1900 by Canon Barnett, whose experience with university extension in the East End of London had convinced him that lectures were insufficient for the development of real study. Students, he felt, needed the constant supervision of

a tutor. Lecturers engaged in extension work had made the experiment of providing a period before each lecture when topics raised in the previous lecture might be discussed. It was not until the foundation of the WEA, however, that there existed the machinery that would make possible systematic work of this kind. A conference held at the University of London in 1906 led to the proposal to set up a class embodying the principle of tutorial work, and in the following year a class of this type was in operation in Battersea under Professor Patrick Geddes. Meanwhile, in Rochdale, which had a long and honourable record in adult education, the success of Oxford University Extension lectures had stimulated the demand for continuous and systematic study. A request also having come from Longton, in the Potteries, arrangements were made in January 1907, for tutorial classes to be conducted in both these centres by R. H. Tawney, at that time lecturer in economics at Glasgow University. Seven months later an important conference was held at Oxford to discuss the twin topics, 'What Work People Want from Oxford', and 'What Oxford Can Do for Work People'. Arising out of this conference there was set up a committee consisting of seven representatives of the University and an equal number representing the WEA, charged with the duty of drawing up a report. This document, *Oxford and Working-class Education*, had great influence on the course of adult education in England and may be considered as the charter of the university tutorial classes.

The basic principles involved in tutorial classes are simple. The classes are controlled by a joint committee composed of equal numbers of representatives of the WEA and the University. The size of classes is limited so as to allow of individual work. Students enrolling must undertake to continue their studies for a period of years and to do written work. 'In the autumn of 1908 Oxford commenced six additional classes, and by the following year the Univer-

sities of Cambridge, Manchester, Liverpool, London, Leeds, and Sheffield had also undertaken tutorial class work, and in the session 1909-1910 there were thirty-nine classes running.⁶

Tutorial classes had important advantages. Not only did they provide opportunity for continuous and guided study, thus constituting a 'hard core' of adult education, but they also gave expression to a principle more than once reinforced in various official reports⁷—the principle that adult education is an integral part of the function of a university. The success of the scheme has been vouched for by more than one authority. A. L. Smith, Master of Balliol College, Oxford, has been quoted as saying that a quarter of the essays written were as good as the work done by men who obtained first-class honours in the Final School of Modern History at Oxford. More cautious, but perhaps more convincing, is the judgment passed by Prof. L. T. Hobhouse and Mr. J. W. Headlam, H.M.I., in their report to the Board of Education (1909-1910):

To compare the work actually done in these classes with that of an Oxford or Cambridge undergraduate is a method of doubtful value. The conditions differ, and the product is in some respects better and in others not so good. There is more maturity of mind and more grip of reality behind many of their papers. There is, as a rule, naturally, less of the qualities arising out of a general literary education. If, however, the question be put whether, so far as they go, and within the limits of time and available energy, the classes are conducted in the spirit which we have described, and tend to accustom the students to the ideal of work familiar at a university, we can answer with an unhesitating affirmative: and, in particular, the treatment both of History and Economics is scientific and detached in character. As regards the standard reached there are students whose essays compare favourably with the best academic work. . . . The paper

⁶ Price, T. W. *The Story of the W.E.A.* London 1924.

⁷ E.g. *Final Report* of the Royal Commission on University Education in London, and *Final Report* of Ministry of Reconstruction, Adult Education Committee.

work done by the students was naturally of very unequal merit. Some of the earliest essays are of a very elementary character. . . . The best third-year students would, we think, be quite in a position to read for the Oxford Diploma in Economics, and would, probably, after a year's full work, obtain it without difficulty. Here and there work of a still higher standard is to be found.⁸

It is not to be thought that all work done by students of the English WEA was of this high standard, or that the tutorial classes were the only kinds of classes. Many other facilities were provided: short courses, one-year courses, lectures of topical interest, and study circles, all forming part of the restless drive for workers' education that characterized the early years of the movement. The Association's magazine, *The Highway*, which began publication in 1908, quickly attained a wide circulation.

The progress of the Association in the years immediately preceding World War I left little doubt that the WEA, so enthusiastically founded on faith, had justified its existence. It had 179 branches with over 11,000 individual members; over 3,000 students were enrolled in 155 tutorial classes; its work as a catalytic agent, or as a ferment, had brought favourable comment from many quarters. By the end of 1914 it had widened the outlook of the universities, infusing a new spirit into extension and extra-mural work; it had the confidence of a large part of the labour movement and had demonstrated that some, at least, of the under-educated were capable of intellectual work at a level scarcely thought possible in 1900; while retaining its independence, it had received a measure of support and recognition from the State; and it had become firmly established in at least two Australian states—surely no insignificant record.

Such, then, was the movement that Meredith Atkinson and David Stewart introduced during their New Zealand visit in the early months of 1915. It took courage to attempt

⁸ Quoted by Adult Education Committee, *Final Report*, 68.

such a task during a war that, even then, had commenced to affect life in this country. For the work of pioneering it would have been difficult to find two more suitable men. Atkinson was an Oxford graduate who had made his first contact with the WEA through the co-operative movement. Prior to his appointment in Sydney he had been attached to Durham University, where he had led extra-mural classes in the North of England. A man of considerable scholarship, he was a most accomplished and persuasive speaker, able to convey to his hearers the enthusiasm he himself felt for the movement. Stewart, who had for some time been prominent in the labour movement in New South Wales, was not a complete stranger to New Zealand, having been in this country from 1908 to 1910. His association with the Carpenters' Union enabled him to gain support from various branches of that body in the main centres. Even before Mansbridge visited Australia, Stewart had learned something of the work of the WEA through his brother, who had been connected with the organization in England.⁹ The two men formed a useful team and stressed the dual appeal of the WEA to the university and to the trade unions.

Though there had been some preliminary organization, Atkinson and Stewart appear to have come, not in response to a request from any large body in this country, but as men who, believing in the value of the WEA, desired to see it extended still further. Here and there an enthusiastic ex-student of the English WEA had settled in New Zealand and, linking up with study-groups already in existence, had in some measure prepared the ground. Mansbridge had written to one or two men prominent in university circles before his intended visit, while Atkinson and Stewart had been in correspondence with likely supporters throughout 1914. On learning of the proposed tour, Dr. James Hight, of Canterbury College, had approached the secretary of the Trades and Labour Council in Christchurch, and a meeting

⁹ Stewart is still (1944) General Secretary of the WEA in New South Wales.

of union secretaries was convened to discuss the proposal. The organizing committee that was set up brought into the WEA H. D. Acland and W. J. McCullough, who were to remain identified with the organization for many years. In Wellington a meeting was held in the Town Hall late in December 1914 to discuss the formation of a branch of the WEA in the Wellington district. As the result of these and similar efforts, good working committees were functioning in Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch by the time Atkinson and Stewart arrived.

There had been some misgiving as to the wisdom of introducing a movement so specifically adapted to English conditions. In a leading article some six months earlier the *Auckland Star*¹⁰ had concluded:

Whilst entirely sympathizing with the main object of tutorial classes, we should like to suggest that it would be an advantage if the movement could be organized in New Zealand itself without waiting to be engineered from outside. This would secure its being in closer relation with the actual conditions and intellectual and social demands of the people of the Dominion. We have mentioned that the most popular subjects are social economics and political science. Our social system is on a different footing from that of the Old Country, and as the instruction is meant to be more practical than academic, it would be distinctly advisable that the lecturers and teachers should be thoroughly acquainted with New Zealand affairs. Of course there is a great deal to be learned from England and a great deal also from other countries, especially America, where there has been a thorough educational awakening, but it would be a mistake to attempt merely reproducing the whole system and curriculum of any other country or to wait for other than native teachers and lecturers. It is to be hoped that this great task of spreading universal culture will be taken in hand by New Zealanders themselves with the initiative and self-reliance that has marked the country in the past and has often made it in social progress a model to the world.

¹⁰ 27 June 1914.

But whatever the reservations may have been, the persuasive arguments of Meredith Atkinson soon convinced academic circles of the value of the proposal. His address to the Senate of the University early in 1915 aroused the greatest enthusiasm. Sir Maurice O'Rorke confessed himself completely convinced; his sentiments were echoed by Professors Chilton and J. Macmillan Brown and Dr. Fitchett. The Finance Committee, to which the proposal to assist the movement was referred, reported 'That in the opinion of this Committee a forward movement in University Extension is desirable by providing for Extension Lectures and Tutorial Classes in University Districts; and that the Colleges be asked what aid from the University would be necessary to give effect to the movement'.¹¹ At a later meeting in the same year the Senate decided to make a grant of £300 from the recently acquired National Endowment Fund to each of the four colleges for tutorial or university extension classes. Professor (now Sir) Thomas Hunter moved that the grant be made for five years; but on this matter the Senate decided to seek legal opinion. The Chancellor, together with Hunter and George Hogben (Director of Education), were appointed representatives on a joint deputation of the University and the WEA to the Government, asking for an annual subsidy in aid of the university tutorial classes and of the WEA.

Meanwhile the work of establishing the WEA proceeded in each of the four centres and in Invercargill.¹² Public lectures were arranged at which Atkinson spoke on industrial history; lunch-hour meetings in factories were addressed by Stewart. On the whole, the reception was favourable. Reports of the meetings varied according to the

¹¹ *Minutes of Senate*, 1915.

¹² For the benefit of possible overseas readers it may be explained that the University of New Zealand is not a teaching body. The work of teaching is carried on by the four university colleges, situated in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin, and the two agricultural colleges, at Palmerston North and Lincoln. The establishment of the WEA in Invercargill was a more or less accidental result of the arrival of Atkinson in Dunedin on a holiday.

sympathies, imagination, and political beliefs of reporters and editors. A Dunedin paper recorded that, at a meeting in the Allen Hall, 'The well-to-do went up the stairway in the company of men whose sole capital is their brains, professors and members of parliament sat on a level with Labour leaders. It was a muster of the thoughtful'.¹³ On the other hand, this picture of sweet concord is not reflected in the account (from a left-wing paper¹⁴) of a meeting held in Wellington a few weeks before the campaign opened. D. Stanley Smith is reported as having explained that, with the coming of individualism and competition, a premium was put on wealth and not on capacity. 'While capacity worked hard in the factory, incapacity loitered easily through a college course.' Seconding a motion moved by M. J. Mack, Secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, Sir Robert Stout said that he welcomed the Association as a means of enthusing all workers in the cause of education. He referred to the existing facilities at the university colleges. 'This led to some confusion, some thinking that he meant that the present system of university education should be applied to the workers. The discussion ranged from tutorial classes down to the necessity for knowledge in order to outwit Germany on questions of industrial expansion.' Uncertainty concerning some of the basic aims of workers' education appears also in a resolution of the Auckland Education Board, which was of opinion that certificates should be issued for work done in the classes.

In view of the criticism that in later days was directed towards the WEA, it is worth noting that the Association was at first regarded with considerable suspicion by left-wingers. In the correspondence columns of the *Maoriland Worker*, at that time still under the influence of the old Federation of Labour elements, 'One of the Shorn Lambs' expressed doubt regarding the WEA: 'Can the capitalist

¹³ *Evening Star*, 26 February 1915.

¹⁴ *Maoriland Worker*, 6 January 1915.

press leopard change its spots or the Ethiopian Stout his skin?' Even after the classes had been established, another correspondent explained that the working class should keep clear of the WEA. The tutor, he argued, 'is subsidized by the enemy, and for some reason. He who pays the piper calls the tune. Should the class decide to study the revolutionary writings of Marx, Engels, Dietzgen, Lewis H. Morgan, and others of that school, especially the former, and should the tutor encourage and honestly assist them to master the teachings of those fine proletarian thinkers, do you think he would be permitted to hold his job?' It was a somewhat cynical comfort that was offered by a third writer: 'So, sir, "A Shorn Lamb" may rest content that the capitalists are almost as big fools as the workers, and by supporting the WEA he and his fellows will be able to retain their fleeces for their own use.'¹⁵ On the whole, however, the new Association was given a sympathetic welcome by organized labour. Many pages of the *Maoriland Worker*, at that time edited by H. E. Holland (later leader of the Labour Party), were devoted to reports of lectures and meetings, while essays submitted by students in the early classes were printed in full.¹⁶ In most of the centres the cause was enthusiastically espoused by men of influence in both industrial and political spheres. The Hon. (later Sir) George Fowlds, Mr. (later Sir) John Luke (Mayor of Wellington), Mr. W. Downie Stewart in Dunedin, had given every assistance to the visitors. Among the officials in the various branches of the Association were many who, either at that time or a little later, became important in the labour movement. In Wellington, A. H. Hindmarsh, M.P., the first President, was also chairman of a combined group of Social Democratic and Labour members of the House; D. Stanley Smith and F. Cornwell (later Secretary of the New Zealand Federation of Labour) were also prominent; Auckland

¹⁵ *Maoriland Worker*, various dates January to July, 1915.

¹⁶ Notably essays by M. Silverstone (now a Director of the Reserve Bank) on various economic subjects.

contributed T. Bloodworth (later a member of the Legislative Council), W. Manson, Secretary of the Furniture Trades Union, and O. McBrine, later prominent in labour circles in the northern city; in Christchurch E. J. Howard, Secretary of the General Labourers' Union took a prominent part; while in Invercargill the Rev. J. K. Archer was the first president.

No less imposing is the list of those connected with the university colleges who helped in establishing the movement. In Auckland, Professors H. W. Segar, C. W. Egerton, and J. P. Grossmann; in Wellington, Professors T. A. Hunter and E. Marsden; in Christchurch, D. B. Copland, L. G. Whitehead, and Professors C. Chilton and J. Hight; in Dunedin, Professors H. D. Bedford, W. B. Benham, and J. Malcolm were all active either as tutors or administrators. Many of these men have left their mark on more than one branch of education in this country.

When it is remembered that, even in 1915, New Zealand was beginning to feel the effects of the war, the fact that the movement was established at all is remarkable enough; that it was successfully launched is a very great tribute to the ability of those who undertook the initial organization. Though the formation of tutorial classes had been the aspect of the work of the WEA that had been most stressed, the five branches by no means confined themselves to this work. Public lectures, study-groups, field days, and conferences were organized, with the object of arousing interest and gaining public support. Among many members of the labour movement, who were now fully alive to the importance of education, these efforts met with a ready response. In a previous chapter mention has been made of the change that had taken place in the years preceding World War I. At the time of the establishment of the WEA there were many in the ranks of organized labour who saw the necessity of grasping every possible opportunity of preparing themselves as candidates for election to Parliament. In 1914

the Party had offered only eighteen candidates; in 1919 there were nearly three times that number. Not a few of those who were leading figures in political labour were men who, coming from other countries, had missed opportunities for formal schooling, and the early classes of the WEA contained many who later entered Parliament, and not a few who eventually held Cabinet rank. Their keenness, and the electric atmosphere that surrounded the discussion of national problems such as war-finance and conscription, gave a virility and perhaps an air of urgency to the study of economics and industrial history; the 'class-consciousness' that was then evident among certain sections of the labour movement, and the suspicions attaching to the WEA from the extreme left, made for lively discussions that on occasion extended long past the nominal closing-time of classes.

It seems fairly clear that the WEA as it was established in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin, and Invercargill, was an attempt to copy the English model. The various districts acted more or less independently, but conformed to much the same pattern. The affairs of each centre were in general conducted by a district council made up of representatives of affiliated bodies (trade unions, educational bodies, and—in some instances—chambers of commerce), representatives of tutorial classes, and a number of co-opted members. On the council fell the main work of organization and the raising of funds. The arrangement of public lectures and certain classes below the rank of tutorial classes or preparatory classes was in some instances also undertaken by the district councils. What was in effect the tutorial classes committee (known in early days by various names) was composed of representatives of the district council and of the university college authorities in equal numbers. This committee controlled the strictly tutorial classes, appointed tutors, expended the grants made by colleges for tutorial classes, and generally had oversight of academic as opposed to financial and organizational arrangements. Subject to

certain modifications to be discussed later, this has remained the framework of the WEA since its foundation.

There were certain difficulties inherent in the early scheme. The district councils allocated some of their funds for payment of the cost of tutorial classes, but the payment tended to be made in dribs and drabs, so that the tutorial classes committees were often in doubt as to their income for the year.¹⁷ The distinction between organization of classes (a function of the district council) and supervision of classes (a function of the tutorial classes committee) was not always clearly drawn or capable of being clearly drawn. Again, since the emphasis was at first on tutorial classes (the essentials of which were small numbers, written work by students, and regular contact with tutors over a period of years), the movement was necessarily confined, for the most part, to those urban areas where university colleges or large secondary schools provided suitable tutors. The university colleges were poorly staffed, and lengthy travel was not possible for professors and lecturers whose normal work consisted largely of evening lectures. Oddly enough, tutorial work was attempted in the WEA at a time when it remained practically impossible within the university because of meagre staffing. Even some eight years after the foundation of the WEA a professor in one of the colleges occupied concurrently the three chairs of History, Economics, and Mental and Moral Philosophy, and carried unaided the whole teaching load of the three departments. It is surprising to learn that he was for many years one of the most energetic of the WEA tutors. There were giants in those days!

The increasing demands of the armed forces, too, meant that the work of younger men was liable to interruption. The long hours worked in industry and the removal of man-

¹⁷ It had been the practice in some centres to leave the expenditure of the £300 grant made to the colleges by the university in the hands of the tutorial classes committees. From 1917, in accordance with the requirements of the Auditor-General, all payments for tutors' salaries were made (and all tutors appointed) by the governing bodies of the colleges. The tutorial classes committees, therefore, function as sub-committees of the college councils.

power from one district to another so changed the composition of classes that many of them, though planned as three-year classes, began each year with almost a new membership. Not a few who had been tutors were drafted into the forces. In Christchurch the city economics classes had, in six years, no fewer than four different tutors and six changes in tutorship.

The quality of the tutorial work doubtless varied. No adequate and unbiased review of the classes was made for some years, and in the struggle for recognition of tutorial work, some pardonable colouring of the picture may have taken place. The first Dominion report of the WEA includes a statement by H. D. Bedford, first tutor of an economics class in Dunedin. Bedford found the technique of one hour's lecture succeeded by an hour's free discussion 'incomparably superior to the system commonly adopted in university colleges'. He commented on the freshness of mind shown by students, and on their ready questioning of any statement irrespective of the authority to whom it was attributed. 'At times the discussions were highly illuminating and criticisms of students again and again forced me to reconsider my own conclusions on economic problems.' Of the essays he remarks:

About half the class regularly wrote the fortnightly essay.¹⁸ Some of the essays were naturally marked by imperfections of diction and defects of logic, but most of them showed originality of thought and, what was particularly gratifying, a determination to have only reasoned beliefs in the sphere of economics. There were about half-a-dozen essays of a quality as high as any I have ever been privileged to receive from University students.

Like most of the early tutors Bedford endeavoured to develop the work progressively through a three-year cycle, and his untimely death in 1918 robbed the movement of a remarkable supporter.

That there had been a little too much optimism on the

¹⁸ The membership of the class was 'over thirty'.

question of essay-writing is indicated in 1918 by the report of Archdeacon Woodthorpe, who succeeded Bedford.

Our experience in Dunedin is that of the WEA generally, viz., that essay-writing is confined to a few of our members. The discussions were keen and sustained, but it is rather striking that some of our members who contribute most to the discussions, avail themselves but little of the opportunity to write essays.

The difficulty was not confined to the South. The Wellington report of 1919 contains the following significant paragraph:

It still seems difficult to obtain satisfactory written work, but indeed in some cases to secure any serious study of the subject at all, many members enjoying the lectures sufficiently to attend, but not making any effort in the direction of home study, reading, or writing; hence the failure of the important essay branch of the work.

It has been possible to verify these statements from a few members of the early classes. Some of them explain that, though they themselves wrote essays, the proportion of the class doing so was seldom higher than fifty per cent and frequently lower than twenty-five per cent.

As an alternative to essay-writing for ensuring continuous study, Woodthorpe distributed very full typed notes of his lectures so that the group could meet again for more detailed discussion. The plan proved successful, and incidentally made possible the extension of the work into districts that could not be reached by qualified tutors. But adequate guidance in such work required staff far in excess of that which could be provided at the time. Library facilities were sorely needed, too, and the limited funds at the disposal of the Association made the provision of books extremely difficult. Some centres imported textbooks for sale or loan to their classes; but this involved the danger of accumulation of dead stock and at the same time diverted funds from the development of additional classes. Nevertheless, the more the scope of tutorial work extended the greater became the need for libraries. At this time the libraries of the university

colleges, which were made available to WEA students, were in some instances shockingly inadequate, and very few books were available on many of the subjects studied by tutorial classes. It was indeed difficult to expect individual work from students many of whom had no facilities for borrowing books, and who, even had they been willing to buy them, would have been lucky to find the books they wanted.

It has to be remembered that the funds available for tutorial work in any university district amounted to £300 granted by the University of New Zealand from the National Endowment Fund, supplemented by money handed over from the district council for this purpose. The district council, in its turn, obtained its income from students' fees, donations (from some local bodies a considerable sum), and affiliations. The average income of the wealthiest district council over the first five years did not amount to more than £271; the poorest probably¹⁹ received about £87. While direct Government aid was not available until 1919, the WEA was fortunate in obtaining substantial donations from certain local bodies. Such donations, together with affiliation fees from trade unions and other similar bodies, made up a large part of its income. Local body grants represented 61 per cent of the income of the Wellington District Council in 1919, while affiliation fees represented a further 8 per cent. In Auckland corresponding figures were 84 per cent and 10 per cent. Generous as these contributors were, the WEA was to find to its cost that such sources of income are liable to sudden withdrawal in times of financial depression or when political feeling becomes acute.

In the first five years of its existence in New Zealand the WEA had much solid achievement to its credit. More than any previous movement it had aroused real interest in adult

¹⁹ Owing to the different methods of keeping accounts, and in particular the occasional confusion of district council and tutorial classes committee funds, a more accurate estimate does not appear to be possible.

education among many sections of the public. It had gained the official support both of the University and of organized labour, and the era of State support was not far distant. From the beginning it had drawn its membership from a fairly wide field, though in this it had encountered criticism from within and without the movement. With all their shortcomings, its tutorial classes (which in the years 1915-19 numbered 18, 26, 26, 36, and 45)²⁰ were by 1919 providing opportunity for serious study to upwards of 1,000 men and women, while public lectures, short courses, and educational conferences had reached a much wider public. Only restricted finance and the limited supply of qualified tutors had prevented an even more rapid expansion. Clubs and societies organized among class members had helped to give them a sense of belonging to a social group with a strong common interest. If holders of extreme economic views, whether revolutionary or reactionary, still regarded the movement with suspicion, it must be added that opposition had for a time given place to mild distrust.

But the pioneering years had produced ample evidence of growing-pains within the movement. Naturally enough, the first efforts had been in the main directed to establishing classes in those centres where tutors were most readily available. But there was a real need for extension to country towns and even to less populous areas, where the attempts that had been made to explore new territory had met with remarkable success. By 1919 classes were being conducted in nine or ten towns outside the main centres, and, but for the difficulty of finding and paying part-time tutors, this work could have been extended still further. Indeed the country, lacking the distractions of city life, appeared to offer greater opportunities for extension than did some of the city areas. Various experiments in providing machinery for the establishment of local Associations had been made, but the basic difficulty was one of finance. It was calculated that the cost

²⁰ The term 'tutorial' was probably not strictly applicable to all these classes.

of each tutorial class was about £100 per annum.²¹ One district adopted the rule of requiring the local committee to find £40 of this amount, the balance being made up from tutorial class funds (some £800 for the whole district) and contributions from money collected by the district council. Under such conditions the number of full classes that could be formed was limited, and the individual districts had to decide between intensive and extensive work on an income that was not necessarily proportional to the quantity or quality of the work undertaken. No system of capitation grants was evolved, as had been the case in the development of technical education. Despite repeated efforts to obtain Government assistance during the war years, and a favourable recommendation of the National Efficiency Board, the Government failed to alleviate the position until the passing of the *University Amendment Act* 1919, when a 'permanent' annual grant of £2,000 was made available for tutorial class work. This sum was divided equally among the four colleges.

While this grant to some extent improved the position, it was not sufficient to remove the basic difficulty. Without the services of full-time tutors the tutorial classes committee had a knotty problem in arranging country work. It was indeed a lucky accident if there happened to be in any centre a suitably qualified man able and willing to act in his spare time as tutor to a group which, in its turn, happened to desire to study the subject in which he possessed qualifications. In a comprehensive report to the Canterbury College Board of Governors, Professor J. B. Condliffe (who had returned from active service and had acquired a knowledge of the English WEA) summed up the position in 1920 as follows:

Up till the present time the Joint Committee (i.e. Tutorial Classes Committee) has had to rely upon the services of such

²¹ Pamphlet issued by Wellington WEA, undated, but probably issued early in 1921.

graduates as were available, interested in the work, and not too busy in better-paid occupations. A tutorial class at £60 per annum²² may be more interesting but is distinctly less profitable than night work in a business 'college'. The Committee has been able to command the services of even the most enthusiastic and successful tutor only up to the point where he could no longer sacrifice his future interests by remaining at unprofitable work. There has been, and is still, no prospect of keeping even part-time tutors in the movement while the salary remains so low. The obvious result is a succession of untried tutors, who are unfamiliar with the needs and methods of the classes.

How far other districts had suffered from a 'succession of untried tutors' is difficult to say; but the need for full-time tutors was becoming apparent.

Not unrelated to this problem was the whole question of standards in tutorial classes. Enthusiasts have been only too prone to over-estimate the proportion of even the most enlightened community to whom hard, continuous, intellectual work is acceptable. Reference has already been made to the difficulties experienced in obtaining written work from students, and by 1919 the drift towards short courses and study circles was becoming noticeable. This change was in part connected with finance, since the cost of the less intensive work was considerably lower; the standard of leadership, too, was less exacting; but a contributing factor was the great mobility among New Zealand workers. One suspects, too, that the pioneers of the WEA in their effort to extend the movement, spread their resources too thinly.

The subjects covered by classes were, of course, in part determined by the qualifications of the tutors offering. In the second year of its existence the WEA extended its list of subjects far beyond economics and industrial history, to include hygiene, chairmanship and debating, English literature, electricity, industrial law, sociology, home science, and psychology. There were critics who lamented this extension,

²² The rate of payment varied, and had been as high as £80. At the present time (1944) it is about £44 for a class meeting 22 times.

doubting the suitability of some of these subjects for inclusion in a scheme of serious adult education. Others saw in them a departure from the spirit of the WEA and a drift towards the less rigorous types of university extension. In view of the later history of the movement, one may be justified in pointing to this change as significant—the first indication of an inevitable tendency for the WEA, as almost the sole agency of general adult education, to become involved in the multitudinous needs of a modern community. To this point it will be necessary to return later.

When the war ended, the WEA could be regarded as firmly established. Its thirty-six classes had an enrolment of nearly one thousand students, and the need for some uniformity of organization was becoming increasingly evident. Late in 1918 preparatory arrangements were made for the setting up of a Dominion Council; but no meetings of this body were held until 1920, when a Dominion constitution was drawn up for consideration by the four districts. The constitution left all real power in the hands of the district councils and the university tutorial classes committees, the Dominion Council being mainly a co-ordinating agency representing the WEA in national undertakings. Official recognition of the WEA by the Government came in 1922 when a grant of £500 was made to the Dominion Council to cover organizing expenses. From the beginning only a small portion of this grant has been used by the central body, which has divided the unexpended balance among the four districts.

CHAPTER V

Acclimatization

1920-30

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FROM 1920 until the coming of the serious trade depression some ten years later, the WEA underwent a period of remarkable development.¹ The number of students increased from under 1500 to over 7000, while there was a corresponding growth of classes from 56 to 200. These increases are illustrated in Fig. I, and the detailed statistics on which the Figure is based are given in Appendix II. But much more important than this external evidence of growth were the subtle changes taking place within the movement. It was by 1930 no longer possible to think of the work of the WEA as consisting mainly of the organization of tutorial classes. There was, too, a gradual departure from the original English tradition; in other words, what has been called the geographical principle was becoming more important than the historical. The change did not come about without frequent and repeated efforts to get back to the original plan; but the opening up of new areas was accomplished in the end only by the development of new techniques, some of which have proved to be of much more than local significance.

¹ The movement was also affected by the post-war slump about 1920-21, and by the minor recurrence of depressed conditions about 1926.

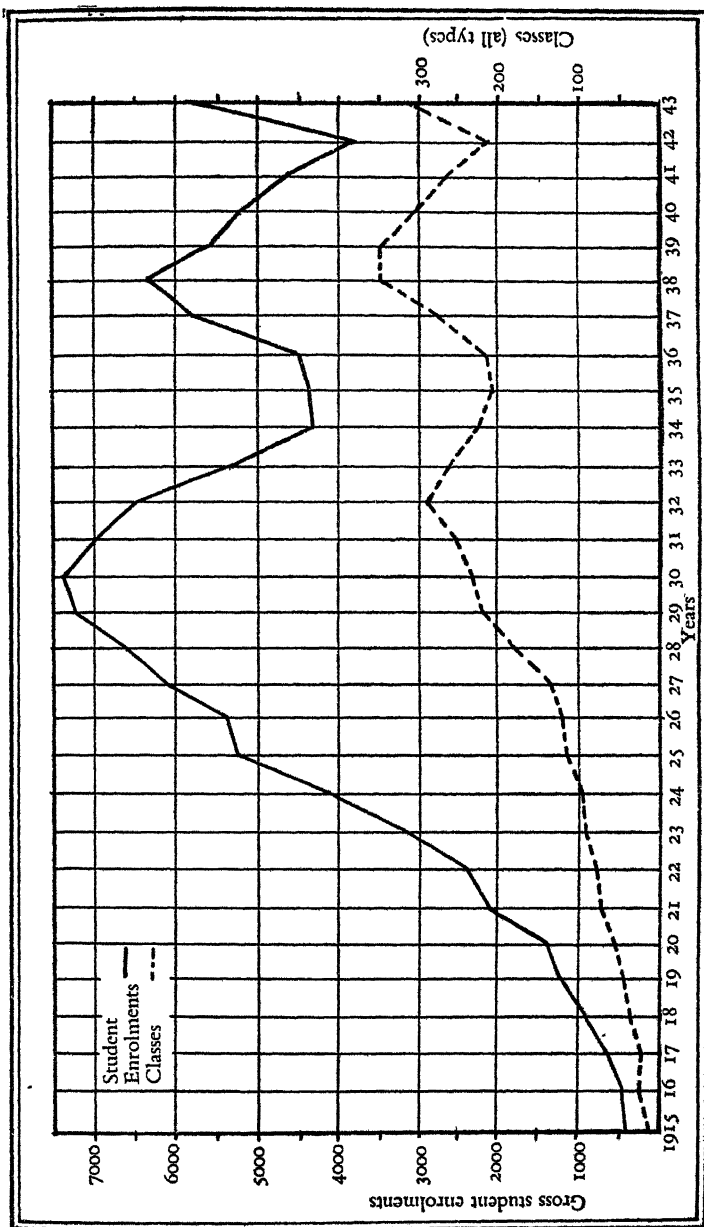


Fig. 1 Fluctuations in Number of Enrolled Students and of Classes, WEA, 1915-43

To the period under discussion belongs the beginning of a tendency that was to become more marked in later years; this might be called the ascendancy of the university colleges in the planning and control of WEA activities. Organization had originally been a function of the district councils; the supervision and appointment of tutors had been the province of the tutorial classes committees. In certain districts a fairly sharp line was drawn between these two functions, and occasional disputes arose when it appeared that the committee was usurping the function of the council. While there was at this period no active attempt on the part of the committees to control the WEA, there was nevertheless a tendency in the direction already indicated. In effect, it became customary for the year's planning to be done by the tutorial classes committees, which became responsible, more and more, for the direction in which the teaching work developed. There was always the possibility—easily exaggerated it is true—that the councils, so far from discovering needs and applying to the committees for assistance, would find themselves presented with a programme of classes already arranged.

The appointment of an academic 'director of tutorial classes' served to assist this development, particularly where, as in Auckland, the appointment of a full-time director in 1922 allowed of a settled policy of expansion.² The fixed grants for adult education were largely earmarked for that portion of the work which came under the jurisdiction of the tutorial classes committee. The appointment of full-time tutor-organizers absorbed a considerable part of the revenue of the districts, and such officers, when appointed, became officers of the university colleges. The title 'tutor-organizer', however, implied a double function, so that in practice there

² Auckland has been the only centre to have a full-time director of tutorial classes; in the other centres the duties have been undertaken by members of the full-time lecturing staff of the university colleges. Wellington, while recognizing the value of a full-time director, has consistently followed the policy of using its available resources to provide full-time tutors for country districts, leaving city classes to be taught by part-time tutors.

was often some uncertainty as to how far such a person came under the control of the district council, and how far he was responsible to the college council through the tutorial classes committee. The popular use of the term 'WEA tutor' did not help to make the position any clearer. There was at least one case in which a full-time tutor denied any obligation to report to the district council. It is fair to say that the influence of the university colleges became more and more important in the movement, and that more and more of the initiative rested with those who came into the movement from the university.

It happened that the university teachers connected with the WEA at this time were men of considerable force of personality. Condliffe, who had been connected with the early classes, returned to the staff of Canterbury College. There he quickly became a driving force in adult education, putting into practice ideals that had been strengthened by association with the English movement. The wisdom of his critical reports, no less than his great enthusiasm for adult education, enabled him to infuse new life into the Canterbury movement. At about the same time, too, the Canterbury centre received the impress of another striking personality in Professor James Shelley, who was appointed to the Chair of Education in 1920. Shelley had been in the army, and had a wide experience of adult education. He brought to the movement a new set of interests that left a permanent mark on the WEA. His immense vitality and extensive knowledge of drama, literature, and the arts, together with very great ability as a speaker, made him an extremely popular lecturer. Year after year the membership of his classes in drama and psychology reached almost staggering figures. In drama, the enrolment during ten years only once fell below 100, and reached a peak in 1928 with 275. Critics might, and did, say with truth that such classes could not be tutorial; but no one could deny the dynamic effect produced by Shelley on

WEA audiences.³ As a popular propagandist for adult education he has had few equals in this country.

In Wellington, Hunter had been a force from the beginning. He was able to win the confidence of working-class leaders and to gain support for the movement in academic circles; but perhaps his greatest contribution was made in directing the policy of the movement, and his administrative acumen was such that few decisions were made at this time without his advice. In Auckland there were few figures to match those already mentioned, until a little later, when W. H. Cocker, who had also had experience of the English WEA, became influential.

It would be wrong to suggest that the relations between the University and the WEA were always happy. In 1921, the Chancellor of the University, Sir Robert Stout, in his address to Senate, referred to certain criticisms concerning the economic doctrines of the Rev. J. K. Archer, who had been appointed tutor to the Sydenham economics class.⁴ Archer had long been connected with the movement in Southland; but his appointment had raised a storm of protest on the Canterbury College Board of Governors. The press had taken a hand in the dispute, and it was apparently on press reports that Stout was basing his remarks. The Senate, after some discussion, set up a committee of four 'to investigate the working of the WEA and the application of the grant of money by the Senate'. After full inquiry, in the course of which almost every tutorial class was visited, the committee reported in 1922. On the whole the findings were favourable, but among the recommendations were two proposals which, had they been adopted, might have had important consequences. The first was that the name Workers' Educational Association be changed to 'The

³ It should be noted that Shelley was not alone in attracting large numbers to his classes. J. W. Shaw's Auckland classes in literature attracted in successive years (1923 onwards) 100, 205, 353, 304, 375, 427, 358, and 318; at least six other classes in Auckland had occasional enrolments of about 100 during these years.

⁴ *Minutes of Senate* 1921, 4.

University Adult Class Association'; and the other that local authorities should not appoint any tutor unless he had received a certificate of fitness from the University. Both these recommendations were rejected. Meanwhile, Professors Condliffe and Chilton had made a full report on the incident on behalf of Canterbury College. They came to the conclusion that the attacks made on Archer were not warranted by the facts of the case:

The principle involved is important and we feel that in the best interests of the external work of the College . . . it should be made public that the tutorial class has not been used for propaganda. We should point out also that the tutorial class itself contains men of the most diverse views, that as much time is given to discussion as to lectures, and that discussion is absolutely free.

This, the first of several attacks on WEA tutors, gave rise to the statement of three important principles, which were set out by the Dominion Council and endorsed by the district councils:

- (1) No tutor or student may be allowed to use the WEA for the propagation of his particular religious or economic creed.
- (2) It is indispensable that the tutorial work of the WEA should be under the control of the university college.
- (3) Provided a tutor is efficient, and teaches his subject in a scholarly manner, his private opinions are no concern of the WEA.⁵

It is worth recording that Archer remained tutor of the Sydenham class until he became Mayor of Christchurch in 1926.

Those who had emphasized the importance of adult education as a function of the university received support from the findings of the Royal Commission on University Education (1925). The Commissioners, Sir Harry Reichel and Mr. Frank Tate, dealt at some length with extra-mural work, and, while pointing out the weaknesses of the tutorial

⁵ Minutes of Dominion Council, 7 December 1921.

classes then operating and the lack of continuous study, recommended an extension of adult education:

One of the great educational advances of modern times is the discovery of the potency of organized adult education as a form of university extension. The possibilities which lie ahead of such an educational movement are almost illimitable. It is conceivable that a far greater addition to the intellectual and moral resources of the Dominion may emerge from a higher standard of university life and teaching in the professional schools (and today even the arts and pure science schools are in a sense professional schools), together with a vigorous and well-conceived scheme of adult education through a special staff of efficient university teachers, than by a system which encourages so many to work under imperfect conditions for university degrees. Of course, it is assumed that the men and women studying in extension classes such as those established under the Workers' Educational Association are engaged in the disinterested study of a subject in co-operation with university tutors, and that they desire additional knowledge and culture for their own sakes, and not as a qualification towards a university degree. Whether a sufficient number of men and women are prepared to undertake such a continuous course of study for its own sake remains to be proved, but, in our judgment, culture so obtained is likely to be a real and vital thing. It is worthy of note that one of the recommendations of the recent Royal Commission on Oxford and Cambridge Universities is that 'the future success of extra-mural instruction depends, in our opinion, on its definite acceptance in all universities as an established and essential part of the *normal work* of a university. This change of view should have far-reaching results.'⁶

Elsewhere the Commissioners stated:

We strongly urge upon the consideration of the University and the Government the importance of extending the extra-mural activities of the University. It is not overstating the case, we think, to predict that in the near future adult education may become the most productive field of national education. Any system which will give opportunities to mature men and women to engage in the continuous and disinterested study of some subject, and thus

⁶ *A. to J. E.*-7A 1925, 17.

develop throughout the land a body of clear-thinking students interested in literary and historical or economic and social subjects, must have far-reaching effects for good. . . .⁷

The relevant recommendations of the Commission were as follows:

(1) Extra-mural work should be definitely accepted as an essential part of the normal work of the University.

(2) A special staff should be appointed to conduct such extension work as that for the Workers' Educational Association. The qualifications required should be those prescribed for other University teaching appointments.

(3) The system of appointing a staff to work half time in the university college and half time in extra-mural classes should be tried.

(4) 'Tutorial classes' under the WEA scheme should not be established unless there is a guarantee that the classes can be worked on tutorial lines, essays being regularly written by each member, and members guaranteeing to attend for a continuous course of sufficient duration to enable work of University standard to be accomplished.⁸

The scheme proposed by the Commission has remained in effect largely a counsel of perfection. Little has been done to produce the 'well-conceived scheme of adult education' that the Commission advocated, and the 'system which encourages so many to work under imperfect conditions', against which it directed its criticism, has remained virtually intact. Even when the University set up a special committee to review adult education some ten years later, the major problems raised by the Commission of 1925 do not appear to have received much consideration. The fate of many reports of commissions in this country has been similar: they have remained subjects of academic discussion rather than blue-prints of progress. It is significant that some of the more striking recommendations of the Reichel-Tate Commission in respect to internal* university matters are

⁷ *Ibid.*, 86-7.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 94.

beginning to receive realistic attention only after the lapse of nearly twenty years.⁹

The rapid expansion of the WEA in the period under review was largely the result of the invasion of new territory, as distinct from consolidation in areas already served. In more than one instance the growth of the movement in the main centres failed to keep pace with the very rapid development in rural areas. The needs of smaller country towns and more remote country districts had long been appreciated; but for reasons already mentioned little could be done to satisfy the need. Once begun, the work of travelling tutors proved very successful. By 1925 more than half of the classes were held in areas outside the four main centres and their immediate surroundings.¹⁰

The hardships attached to country work at this time are not generally known. George McCracken, for many years tutor in Otago, had vivid memories of the discomfort of travelling in unheated slow trains, of the unreliability of other means of transport, of stopping overnight at hotels where, in the depth of winter, he could sleep only by putting on all the clothes he had with him, of lecturing in freezing weather, and, through it all, of studying for the next talk or the one after that. Another tutor in the same area had to travel, under such conditions, an average of about 300 miles a week. To reach the farthest class—75 miles from Dunedin—he had to leave home at 8.30 one morning, arriving back at 2 p.m. the following day.¹¹

Expansion in country areas, however, raised new problems. Rural adult education presents difficulties that do not occur in university centres. In some quarters objection was taken to the term 'Workers' in the title of the WEA, and more than one country tutor found, as time went on, that

⁹ An example is the introduction of accrediting in 1944.

¹⁰ District figures for rural work were: Wellington 64 per cent; Canterbury 50 per cent; Otago 60 per cent; and Auckland 33 per cent.

¹¹ This case is quoted from George Manning's article in *International Handbook of Adult Education*. London 1929.

it was expedient to speak of 'adult education' rather than of 'workers' education'. Another difficulty arose from the nature of the organization of the movement. The district councils, composed as they were mainly of representatives of affiliated bodies, almost inevitably tended to consist of city people, particularly of men who, appointed by the trade unions, were not always familiar with the problems or outlook of the smaller towns and rural areas. Even the establishment of country branches with their own councils¹²—a plan of organization put into effect for some time in the Wellington district—failed to solve the problem, largely because of the difficulty of having the branches adequately represented on the district council in the university centre. An incident occurring in 1924, in the Wellington district, provides an illustration of a conflict that was latent. The president of the Wellington District Council, in the course of a public speech, stated that the effective body in the WEA was the district council consisting largely of trade union appointees. A. Ernest Mander, who had for some years achieved remarkable results as a tutor-organizer, challenged this statement in the press, pointing out that the local committees in the Wanganui-Manawatu district were citizens' and students' committees:

There is here no suggestion whatever that any outside bodies, such as trade unions, should control the organization. In this we are, strictly, unconstitutional, but if we did have anything like Trade Union and Labour control the whole thing in this district would collapse.¹³

Mander then went on to state that, three years before, the WEA in that district, especially in Palmerston North, had practically died out:

It was regarded with suspicion—more than suspicion, hostility—by borough councils, leading citizens, and the greater part of the public at large. It was, in fact, thoroughly discredited as an

¹² Wellington was divided into six sub-districts, but these and the district council did not always get on very happily together.

¹³ *Manawatu Times*, 25 November 1924.

educational agency, and was regarded (by public men, newspapers, citizens and students alike) as essentially a political propagandist body.

He claimed to have established the reputation of the organization as a non-party, non-class, non-propagandist, purely educational agency:

Frankly, we have used our official title, Workers' Educational Association, as little and as inconspicuously as possible. With the association which that name had acquired in the minds of most people . . . this was absolutely necessary as a condition of success. Moreover, we conceived that the scope of the scheme had much outgrown the original intentions of those who had started it in England; and it had become in New Zealand—certainly in the Wanganui-Manawatu district—a citizens' rather than merely a sectional workers' movement. Our students are drawn from all classes in the community, and in about the same proportions as they are found in the community at large except that we have, of course, only a small proportion of farmers in the town classes.

When all allowances are made for personal differences in outlook, there remain the two basic difficulties that were to be encountered by the WEA in its expansion: the difficulty of adjusting an imported agency to its new environment; and that of retaining within the framework of its organization work of a kind that it was scarcely designed to accomplish. Not until the end of the period under review did the points raised by Mander become important in other districts, and for the most part staff-tutors appear to have made adjustments in technique without finding it necessary to bring matters to the point of conflict.

If proof were needed of the virility of the WEA during the twenties, it is to be found in the number of interesting experiments that the movement produced. One of the most important was the institution of summer schools in the Canterbury area. The first school, organized by Condliffe and Shelley, was held at Oxford, a small country centre in North Canterbury, during the fortnight following Christmas 1920. A large boardinghouse and a public hall provided

accommodation for nearly one hundred students from all parts of New Zealand. Optional classes were held at 8.30 a.m., and at 10 a.m., and the main lectures (attended by all students) at 11 a.m. The afternoons were given over to rambles and recreation, and the evenings to drama readings, concerts, and the showing of educational films. Though the school differed considerably from summer schools conducted by the WEA in England—the work, like most of that done in New Zealand, being extensive rather than intensive—the stimulus derived by both tutors and students from the shared community life of the camp served to establish summer schools of a similar type as a regular feature of the year's programme. The tradition thus established in Canterbury largely determined the pattern of summer camps in other centres, and they have at times tended to resemble miniature Chautauquas rather than the schools conducted by the English WEA in Oxford and Cambridge colleges. Not only have the New Zealand camps provided opportunity for bringing town and country dwellers together, but, when held in rural centres, they have also served to stimulate an interest in the WEA among the permanent residents of the districts in which they have been held. Somerset has noted that regular WEA classes in 'Littledene' arose out of the first summer school.¹⁴

Various modifications of the Canterbury plan were introduced to suit local conditions elsewhere. Week-end schools were held in some districts, often very informal in nature but none the less effective on that account. One of the most interesting developments was the organization of a winter school on the West Coast of the South Island in 1922. As travelling tutor in Westland, H. Belshaw had felt that, while ordinary tutorial classes were successful, they were not fully satisfying the educational needs of the district. In co-operation with the Canterbury Progress League he was responsible for organizing a combined school for farmers, teachers,

¹⁴ Somerset, H. C. D. *Littledene*. Wellington 1938.

and WEA students. The objects of the school were 'primarily, to give farmers and teachers the opportunity of obtaining such practical and theoretical knowledge as might prove useful to them in their work, and secondly, to stimulate the cultural development of the rural community through the co-operation of farmers and teachers'.¹⁵ Shelley acted as director of the school, and the staff was drawn from Canterbury College and officers of the Department of Agriculture. Lecturers and students were billeted in hotels in Hokitika. Of the 75 enrolled students, about one-third were local farmers, the remainder being teachers and WEA students. The programme began each morning with separate lectures for the two main groups. These lectures were designed to treat of the broad principles of education or farm practice so as to encourage the study of particular problems. The next hour was devoted to a lecture of more general interest, attended by all students, while the last hour each morning was occupied by class discussions of special problems. Visits of educational value were arranged in the afternoons. On one afternoon the farmers of the district organized a Winter Show, at which the tutors gave short addresses on farming problems and the types of cattle exhibited. Each evening a popular lecture in the Town Hall attracted a crowded audience. The school created a great amount of local enthusiasm, and proved of such interest that inquiries concerning its organization were received from as far afield as Canada.

The problem of dealing with the large number of potential country students, who could be reached rarely, if at all, by staff or part-time tutors, was responsible for several important developments. The need for suitable books for study was in part met by the dispatch of boxes of books to classes and groups in remote areas. There were, however, limits to this development, since the libraries possessed by

¹⁵ From Belshaw's MS report, a copy of which was lent to the author by the WAAE, London.

the WEA in the various centres were inadequate even for the city classes. The scanty funds available for extension of libraries provided little for the purchase of duplicate copies. A system of exchange of books between Canterbury and Otago came into operation in 1926. In the following year the Association received the first of a number of generous grants from the Carnegie Corporation of New York. This was a library grant of \$5,000 which, with a Government subsidy, enabled a fund to be established to relieve the position.

In 1926, too, the Canterbury district commenced an experiment which was to affect country work throughout the Dominion. Shelley, who had become Director of Tutorial Classes on the departure of Condliffe to take up an appointment overseas, had from the beginning of his connection with the WEA done much to foster the development of classes and courses in graphic art, literature, and drama. His experience of the expanding country work in the Canterbury district had made him fully aware of the difficulty of supplying tutors in remote rural areas and small towns. As a means of overcoming the difficulty he developed what came to be called the 'box scheme'. Briefly, this consisted in sending carefully chosen and arranged material to groups of students who met regularly to study a definite course. A full course consisted of twenty-four boxes, each containing copies of a simply-worded lecturette and accompanying illustrative material—gramophone records, prints, anthologies, and copies of plays. Members of the group were expected to read the notes before coming to the meeting. The topics of the first five boxes in the course entitled 'Nineteenth Century Music, Art, and Literature' were as follows: (1) Play: *The Younger Generation*; (2) Art: How to Look at Pictures; (3) Literature: The Early Romantic Revival in Poetry; (4) Music: Beethoven and Schubert; (5) Play: *The Lady with a Lamp*. Each group retained a box for a limited time and then forwarded it to the next

group. An important feature of the scheme was that it threw on the group itself the responsibility of conducting its meetings. Much depended on the selection of a suitable leader and an efficient secretary who would see that boxes were dispatched promptly so that the schedule might be adhered to. Country school teachers proved very useful in the local communities, and some of them conducted successful groups for a number of years.

The success of the scheme was remarkable. Critics sneered at this 'Education by the Fireside' as being mere 'educational pap', unworthy of the WEA; but the fact remains that it provided what no other agency at that time made possible, and introduced modern plays and painting to thousands who, but for the box scheme, might have remained indifferent to forms of art of higher value than *The Stag at Bay* and the Weldon supplements that still grace the walls of some country homes. Within the next few years new box sets were prepared, including one which provided the necessary apparatus for the study of experimental psychology. So great was the demand for box courses that special concessions for rail transport were provided by the Railways Department, and the courses found their way to many parts of New Zealand, being either distributed by other centres or sent direct from the Canterbury WEA. By 1930 the box scheme was circulating among 76 groups¹⁶ with a combined membership of over 1500. The work of organizing circuits and keeping the material in order, which became more and more onerous as the demand grew, fell to John Johnson, tutor-organizer for Canterbury, who from 1929 devoted the greater part of his time to duties connected with the scheme. During the years of depression the box scheme proved one of the main ways of retaining contact with students.¹⁷ Incidentally, it may be remarked that some

¹⁶ At least 45 of these groups were in areas outside the Canterbury District. Accurate figures for box scheme enrolments before 1930 are not available.

¹⁷ The cost of the scheme was comparatively low, one estimate placing it at 6s. per head. The net annual cost to the Canterbury District in the thirties was about £434.

country high schools found the material of considerable value to their senior students,¹⁸ and continued to use the box scheme until 1943, when the servicing of schools was discontinued on instructions from the Council of Adult Education.

The box scheme owed some of its popularity to the fact that it was established before broadcasting had passed the experimental stage, and, as will be shown later, its usefulness declined during the late thirties. But with the box scheme, as with almost every venture in New Zealand adult education, lack of finance was a basic difficulty. By the time a group had used the courses for ten consecutive years (as some did) the supply of novel material was exhausted; gramophone records easily deteriorate, and even prints can become shabby and unserviceable.

Meanwhile the problem of spreading the minimum of tutorial assistance over the largest possible area had been exercising the ingenuity of tutors in other places. Mander, as staff-tutor in the northern portion of the Wellington district, had developed what he called 'Clear-Thinking Groups'. These were groups of from six to ten members, meeting once a week to discuss a set of notes expounding certain basic principles of valid argument and the psychology of thinking. Each week's assignment contained a statement or argument on some question of general interest, to be examined by the group. A group decision, arrived at by at least a three-fourths majority, was communicated to the tutor by the group correspondent, who in turn received the comment of the tutor. Groups consisted of people known to one another, and extension of membership was by personal invitation. In this way it was hoped to retain the atmosphere of what Graham Wallas has called 'the dialectic group'. The number of effective Clear-Thinking Groups was recorded as 37 in 1928 and 50 two years later. Though the

¹⁸ In 1933 the Carnegie Corporation advised the University of Western Australia that the box scheme might be applied successfully in that State, and supplied funds to send to New Zealand an investigator from Western Australia.

scheme did not develop further, owing to Mander's resignation, it had great possibilities, and affected to some extent the discussion groups that were organized later.

Correspondence courses, as a means of reaching isolated students and small groups, were introduced in Otago in 1927. The original course dealt with World History and World Problems, and consisted of fortnightly lecture notes with questions and essay subjects. Arrangements were made for lending books to correspondence students, who were encouraged to write to the tutor for help. Some very solid work was done under this scheme. An unexpected result was the publication of the lectures in some of the smaller country newspapers, so that the material of the course reached a wide audience. Among the correspondence students were housekeepers on farms, school teachers in remote areas, men engaged on Public Works construction; the courses found their way even into prisons and Borstal institutions.

In 1925 the development of the WEA had encouraged the Dominion Council to plan the publication of a monthly journal similar to the English *Highway* and its Australian equivalent. It was hoped that the venture would provide opportunity for discussion of matters of moment in world affairs, and that a large part of the journal's space would be devoted to an examination of education in New Zealand. It happened that the scheme received enthusiastic support from M. O'Kane, a member of the Wellington WEA, who was at that time a partner in a printing firm. In September, 1925, the first number of the *New Zealand Highway* appeared under the editorship of Professor Hunter. It was a sixteen-page journal, well set out, and covering a fairly wide range of interests. An early contributor expressed the hope 'that it might not suffer the fate of many of our amateur publications—a brief, enthusiastic life, followed by a death almost violent in its suddenness'.¹⁹ As it turned out, these

¹⁹ *New Zealand Highway*, March 1926, 5.

fears were well grounded. There were exactly three volumes, and only a single sentence in the last issue indicated that publication was about to cease. In its first and best year its subscribers numbered just over 700 (not one in seven of the class membership); and at the end of December, 1927, the number had dropped²⁰ to under 300. The fall in revenue from advertisements and the sudden collapse of the printing arrangements were the immediate causes of its death.

There were at times excellent articles in the journal; it raised many vital questions of WEA policy, and produced some good controversy. One suspects that Hunter, like most honorary editors, was not overwhelmed with suitable copy, and had to engage in a good deal of bullying to fill up the pages. Nevertheless he published some excellent and penetrating reviews from such tutors as Harold Miller, Lloyd Ross, and J. A. Brailsford. But a re-reading of the *New Zealand Highway* after nearly twenty years leaves one with mixed feelings—one is grateful for the historical detail placed on record; but one wonders how far the 'district notes' could have been of more than limited local interest at the time. Any criticism, however, must be modified by the reflection that there was no full-time staff to handle the details of publication. It was certainly not the fault of Hunter, or of his indefatigable assistant Mrs. Maslen, that the experiment was not more successful. Attempts were made at different times to revive the *New Zealand Highway*, but the difficulty experienced in finding a printer and a new editor, together with the lack of unanimity among the districts, led to the abandoning of the proposal.²¹

Of considerable importance was a new development in adult education that took place in Canterbury towards the end of the decade. The success of the box scheme encouraged Shelley to seek other ways of meeting the problem of rural

²⁰ Minutes of Dominion Conference, 24 February 1928.

²¹ The Auckland WEA for some years conducted a regular 'Bulletin' containing student contributions, and more recently has experimented with a wall newspaper.

education. In 1928, Dean James Russell, representing the Carnegie Corporation of New York, made a tour of the British Dominions with the object of advising the Corporation on the expenditure of moneys earmarked for the support of experimental educational schemes. Taking advantage of Dean Russell's presence in New Zealand, Shelley put forward a plan that had been developing in his mind for some time. The proposal was to fit up a motor van as a travelling library which, in addition to books, would carry a projector, a gramophone, and a radio. It would, in this way, be possible for a tutor-driver to visit remote country groups regularly and at fairly frequent intervals. By investigating at first hand the needs of rural communities, the tutor would be able to assist groups in selecting suitable topics of study, and could provide more adequate leadership than could be guaranteed under existing schemes. Above all, regular access to study material would be provided.²² Dean Russell had also received representations from Professor Strong, Dean of the Home Science Faculty of Otago University, concerning proposed schemes for Home Science Extension work in the Otago district. Shelley appears to have considered that the Otago needs could have been met by a scheme similar to that which he had suggested for Canterbury, but operating under the Otago Home Science Department. It was, however, a different plan that finally received approval.

In 1929 the Carnegie Corporation, through its New Zealand Committee, made a grant of £2,000 for each of five years. Of this sum £500 annually was to be allocated to Shelley's scheme, while the remainder was to be devoted to the Otago plan. The Corporation expressed the hope that the Government pound-for-pound subsidy on these amounts would be capitalized so as to create a permanent endowment. Shelley pointed out that the estimated cost of his

²² It is only fair to note that a scheme for a travelling lecture van had been mentioned by E. J. Howard, M.P., at a meeting of the Canterbury District Council, 19 April 1922.

scheme was £1,000 annually for three years and thereafter £800. Permission was finally given for the expenditure of both grant and subsidy as revenue.

At this time Shelley occupied the joint position of Director of Tutorial Classes and Director of the Extension Work of Canterbury College, and it is unfortunate that confusion arose (not unmixed with feeling) concerning the procedure adopted in appointing a tutor to carry out the scheme. There can be little doubt that the grant was made for the development of WEA work in rural districts, but the College Council selected a tutor without consulting the Tutorial Classes Committee. Misunderstandings of this kind occurred, or were narrowly averted, at other times and places owing to the failure to distinguish clearly between tutorial and organizing functions of the WEA. But there were, in addition, occasions when the main cause of confusion arose from attempts to provide educational facilities that did not fit neatly into the original pattern of the WEA.²⁸

Notwithstanding the annoyance caused to some enthusiastic supporters of the WEA, the Canterbury Adult Rural (CAR) scheme was, from its beginning in 1930, an undoubted success. If there had been misunderstanding about the method of appointment, there could be no doubt about the wisdom of the selection of G. T. Alley as the tutor to pioneer the scheme. His mandate read as follows: 'You will be required to organize and develop cultural facilities in rural districts by taking charge of a travelling library, by getting into touch with such persons as can act as leaders of study circles, by addressing meetings, and by any other means decided upon by the Director as likely to carry out the intentions of this scheme. . . .' Until 1935, when the van and tutor were incorporated in a new scheme

²⁸ This is a difficulty in the present (1944) set-up, and is symptomatic of the need for a reconstruction of the machinery of adult education. A similar confusion arose over the development of the ACE (see below). The appointment of tutors is, of course, a function of the college councils, but is usually carried out on the recommendation of the tutorial classes committees.

(the Association for Country Education), also financed by the Carnegie Corporation, the van regularly visited each year from 20 to 35 districts. Up to a dozen regular classes were formed, and book issues rose to nearly 12,000. The CAR scheme fully demonstrated that a keen demand for books could be developed in rural areas, and Alley's experience later stood him in good stead when he was called upon to organize and control a national Country Library Service.

The ten years from 1920 to 1930 were thus years of adventure. In addition to the experiments already mentioned, there were others, less spectacular but none the less important. Radio talks were arranged in the very early years of broadcasting, and for some time a regular weekly WEA session was included in the programmes of many of the more important stations. In response to an official request, the Hamilton branch of the WEA, in conjunction with the Howard League for Penal Reform, arranged lectures and entertainments at Waikeria Borstal Institution. Similar schemes developed in other centres. Series of lectures were commenced in Paparua²⁴ and Mt. Eden prisons, and created considerable interest. When the authorities permitted discussion, lecturers found themselves impressed by the high quality of thought displayed by some of the inmates.

Tutors had for some time found that WEA city classes and country groups had each year attracted a few outstanding students who would benefit by the more intensive study provided for in university courses. The Auckland University College Council was therefore persuaded in 1923 to offer annually a WEA bursary entitling a deserving student to free university education for three years. The success of this scheme was so great that the plan was eventually adopted by the other colleges.²⁵

The form taken by most of these efforts at expansion was

²⁴ The Paparua lectures still continue, the transport arrangements for lecturers being arranged through the Christchurch Rotary Club.

²⁵ For a review of the achievements of WEA bursars see p. 215 below.

to a large extent determined by the difficulty of budgeting for any long-term plan. In the twenties the movement had been affected by two minor trade depressions accompanied by a sudden reduction in the financial assistance available. In 1926 the point had been reached where the expenditure of the tutorial classes committees alone totalled £7,521, while the Government and University grants provided only £4,900. The deficit of £2,621 could be made up only from fees, and from public and private subscriptions.²⁶ The prospects of obtaining this sum were not bright; several of the national trade unions, which had hitherto consistently supported the movement, found it necessary to withdraw their subscriptions. Those in charge of the organization, realizing their responsibilities to the tutors they engaged, had no option but to call a halt in expansion and to pass over opportunities for extending the work further afield. It says something for the courage of those who accepted full-time employment at this period that they accomplished so much at a time when their tenure was so insecure. The precarious financial arrangements of the Association had still wider effects. Local administrators, learning the lesson of these minor depressions, realized that reserves must be built up against a rainy day. As the future was to show, their caution was justified. But that caution put a brake on development, and the search for financial support consumed energy that might have been used more effectively in the real work of education. Despite the very great expansion that continued throughout the decade 1920-30, the movement resembled that variety of inefficient farming in which production is hindered by heavy mortgages, lack of fertilizer, and inadequate farm implements, while valuable productive time is lost in protracted negotiations with the banker.

It is idle to speculate as to what might have happened during the ten years before 1930 if the WEA had confined

²⁶ *WEA Annual Report*, 1926.

its attention to work that could be done thoroughly within the limits of its financial resources. The fact remains that no such intensive development took place. With limited staff and limited income, the WEA—the single carefully organized agency of adult education—was expanding rapidly, experimenting with new methods of supplying revealed needs. And in undertaking tasks outside its original province, the Association was altered in character: it became extensive rather than intensive, its achievements were measurable in terms of quantity rather than quality. One cannot resist the conclusion that an urge to cover more and more ground had triumphed over prudence and tradition. But, in the course of its restless experiment, the WEA revealed many a patch of rich earth where, given time and the necessary tools, a harvest might have been gathered. It is the seeming tragedy of adult education in New Zealand that all that had been so adventurously explored was in danger of being lost during the five bleak years that succeeded.

CHAPTER VI

The Lean Years

1930-1935

* ————— *

To most people the depression that settled down on New Zealand economic life during the 1930s was a bewildering occurrence, as much an 'Act of God' as the earthquakes and floods that have at times wrought desolation. And like men faced with such disasters, many scarcely tried to comprehend its significance. Overseas prices went sliding down in a steep gradient, and exported primary produce had for long been the foundation of New Zealand's economy. For a time it seemed that by increased production and overseas borrowing the threatened calamity could be averted. But in 1930 it became obvious, even to the normally unobservant, that this was no temporary setback such as had been experienced in the previous decade. National income was declining; unemployment figures (of male workers alone) rose year by year from 6,000 in 1929 to over 50,000 in 1933. In one urban area, at the depth of the trough, unemployed males represented five per cent of the total population. It seemed incomprehensible that an appreciable number of people should come near to starving in a land that produced more food than it could sell.

Among the many measures designed to meet the situation it was the policy of internal retrenchment that most directly

and obviously affected the largest number. Cuts in salaries of public servants, and reduction of wages by an Order of the Arbitration Court, were accompanied by a reduction in pensions of one kind and another, while a decrease in Government grants, scholarships, and subsidies of various kinds formed part of the plan to balance the budget at all costs.¹ This is not the place to argue about the wisdom of these measures, but it may be remarked that the human cost of a balanced budget has often to be met by deferred payment; and for some of the economies of the period—witness the partial cessation of school building and the exclusion of the five-year-olds from schools—the instalments are still being met.

Like most social services in such times of adversity, education was sharply affected, while adult education (still regarded as a fair-weather luxury) came perilously near to extinction. It scarcely seems to have occurred to those directing national affairs that a constructive adult education programme might have paid handsome dividends had it been part of the policy of unemployment relief and emergency public works projects.² On the contrary, there were many who, as the depression deepened and a new and sharper edge was given to political controversy, would have wept no tears had the WEA been forced out of existence altogether. To them it appeared as an ultra-radical organization engaged in a type of education that was opposed to the best interests of the established order. But of this more hereafter.

Since the work of the tutorial classes, like the provision of libraries by the mechanics' institutes fifty years before, had come to rely increasingly on Government grants, the removal (or threatened removal) of this prop was always

¹ Beaglehole (*University of New Zealand*, 360) points out that the money actually paid out to the four university colleges by the Government (apart from local endowment revenue) fell from £107,760 in 1930 to £56,722 in 1933.

² New Zealand produced no counterpart of the educational policy of the WPA and the CCC in the U.S.A.

liable to disturb the whole structure. In order to indicate the effects of the depression economies on the WEA, it may be advisable to summarize the main features of the financial arrangements of the Association at the end of the twenties. With the exception of an annual grant of £500 made to the Dominion Council for organizing expenses, Government assistance had very properly been earmarked for the actual work of tutorial classes, and was distributed through the university colleges.³ The *New Zealand University Amendment Act* 1919 had provided for an annual grant of £500, payable, without other appropriation, to each of the four colleges. From 1925 onwards the amount was raised to £750. In addition, each of the colleges received annually from the University Senate a portion of the residual moneys of the National Endowment Funds, varying amounts of which were earmarked by the University for 'WEA and University Extension Classes'. The normal payment from this source was at this time about £300 for each university district.

The work of tutorial classes was further assisted by contributions from the district councils of the WEA. Each district council had its own sources of income—grants from the Dominion Council, affiliation fees, donations from local authorities, and (in some instances) class fees, together with moneys raised by the many peculiar means adopted in a democracy for financing worthy undertakings. A considerable portion of the district council funds was absorbed in what might be called 'overhead expenses'—that is to say, advertising; employment of organizers; rent, lighting, and cleaning; secretarial expenses; and provision of libraries.⁴ What money could be spared after meeting these liabilities and providing for reserves was paid over to the university college as a donation towards the cost of conducting tutorial

³ There was one exception to this principle: an additional grant of £1,000 was made in 1924 to the Dominion Council for division among the centres for organizing expenses.

⁴ This does not apply *in toto* to all district councils. The line of division of duties between the district council and the tutorial classes committee has always been somewhat ragged.

classes. The *New Zealand University Amendment Act* 1926 provided for the payment, without further appropriation, of a pound-for-pound subsidy on any voluntary contribution received by the council of a university college exclusively for the purposes of the WEA. The 'donations' of the district councils were eligible for this subsidy.

So far as any Government grants may be regarded as permanent, the WEA tutorial classes were in receipt of a small but regular income, augmented by a varying amount from local bodies and the Government subsidy. In 1930, however, the statutory grant was reduced by 25 per cent, while in the following year it became doubtful if any support from the State would be forthcoming. As it happened, a reduced grant was paid, but the subsidy was wiped out overnight. A further *Amendment Act* in 1932 removed the subsidy from the regular list by the simple deletion of the words 'without further appropriation' and the substitution of the words 'out of moneys appropriated by Parliament for the purpose'. It was obvious that subsidies were, for the time being, out of the question; in point of fact they have not been renewed. In 1933 even the reduced grant was discontinued. The State had given; the State had taken away.

Nor was this all. The local bodies, some of which had contributed considerable sums to the Association, were as hard-pressed as the central Government, while the trade unions were also short of money. Between 1929 and 1932 trade union affiliations to the movement fell by 48 per cent. The incomes of the district councils and their contributions for tutorial classes fell equally sharply. The outlook was so black by the end of 1931 that, had it not been for an emergency grant of \$10,000 from the Carnegie Corporation, disaster would have overtaken the movement. Even then, those responsible for the work of the WEA had to exert every effort to husband resources. Some accumulated funds could be used for a year or two, and part of the Carnegie

grant could be carried over for the following year; but beyond that, there was little hope. The university colleges themselves were in straitened circumstances, and could offer little more assistance than in previous years. It is no exaggeration to say that the tutorial classes would have ceased altogether after about 1933 had it not been for the enthusiasm of part-time tutors, who in many instances agreed to continue their work without guarantee of payment. In one centre classes were conducted on a voluntary basis; in another tutors' fees were cut by two-thirds; in all there were reductions. In 1931 there had been seven full-time staff tutors in the four districts; in 1934 there were four, while one centre was to remain for three years without a full-time officer.

It was at this point that the movement was again rescued by the Carnegie Corporation, which was beginning to assume the role of fairy godmother to New Zealand education. The Corporation, as has already been mentioned, had embarked on a policy of supporting deserving educational experiments, and of fostering self-help by demonstrating what could be done with adequate financial support. The Carnegie trustees might have been pardoned for possessing some misgivings concerning the success of their efforts in New Zealand. Good work had been done, admittedly, by the CAR scheme and the Home Science Extension Department of Otago University, but neither these experiments nor the emergency grant to the WEA had produced much tangible evidence of willingness or ability on the part of the University, the central Government, or the local bodies to provide the finance necessary to place the undertakings on a sound basis of local support. One feels that there might even have been grounds for believing that the backing of the Corporation, so far from stimulating local effort, had become an excuse for withholding assistance. Whether or not this was in the mind of the Corporation trustees it is impossible to say; but, when a new appeal was made for funds for tutorial classes, the principle of diminish-

ing grants was applied. The sum of \$30,000 was made available for general tutorial purposes, and an additional \$2,500 was earmarked for libraries. These sums, divided equally among the four districts, were paid in five annual instalments of diminishing amounts.

Owing to the different systems of accounting employed during the period both by individual districts and by the

TABLE I

MAIN SOURCES OF INCOME FOR TUTORIAL CLASSES (WEA)
AUCKLAND 1926-1939 (Amounts to nearest pound)

| Year - - - - | 1926 | 1927 | 1928 | 1929 | 1930 | 1931 | 1932 |
|----------------------------------|------|------------------|------|------|------|-------------------|------|
| University or university college | 350 | 350 | 400 | 400 | 350 | 405 | 375 |
| Donations from district council | 528 | 462 | 363 | 444 | 840 | 461 | 53 |
| Subsidies on donations - | 528 | 462 | 367 | 401 | 597 | — | — |
| Government grants - | 750 | 750 | 750 | 750 | 563 | 525 | 272 |
| Carnegie funds - | — | — | — | — | — | 704 | — |
| Total - - - - | 2156 | 2024 | 1880 | 1995 | 2350 | 2095 | 700 |
| Year - - - - | 1933 | 1934 | 1935 | 1936 | 1937 | 1938 ^b | 1939 |
| University or university college | 365 | 314 | 150 | 250 | 250 | 250 | 250 |
| Donations from district council | — | — | — | — | — | — | 1000 |
| Subsidies on donations - | — | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| Government grants - | — | — | — | 563 | 1125 | 1250 | 1250 |
| Carnegie funds - | — | 615 ^a | 484 | 375 | 251 | 124 | — |
| Total - - - - | 365 | 929 | 634 | 1188 | 1626 | 1624 | 1600 |

Notes: ^a Plus £154 library.

^b From this year onwards, other grants were made for adult education not conducted by the WEA.

^c Actually for women's work.

movement as a whole, various attempts to give a comprehensive picture of the fluctuations of finance for the whole of the Dominion have proved unsatisfactory. In Table I, therefore, are given the main sources of income specifically available for tutorial classes in one university district.⁵ The

⁵ The difficulty of arriving at precise figures will be appreciated when it is remembered that the district council year ends on 31 October, the University year on 31 December, and the Government financial year on 31 March. Further, during the worst years of the depression, accounts were paid out of whatever fund happened to show a credit balance. In Auckland this meant that the final accounts were in the nature of adjustments for purposes of reconciliation.

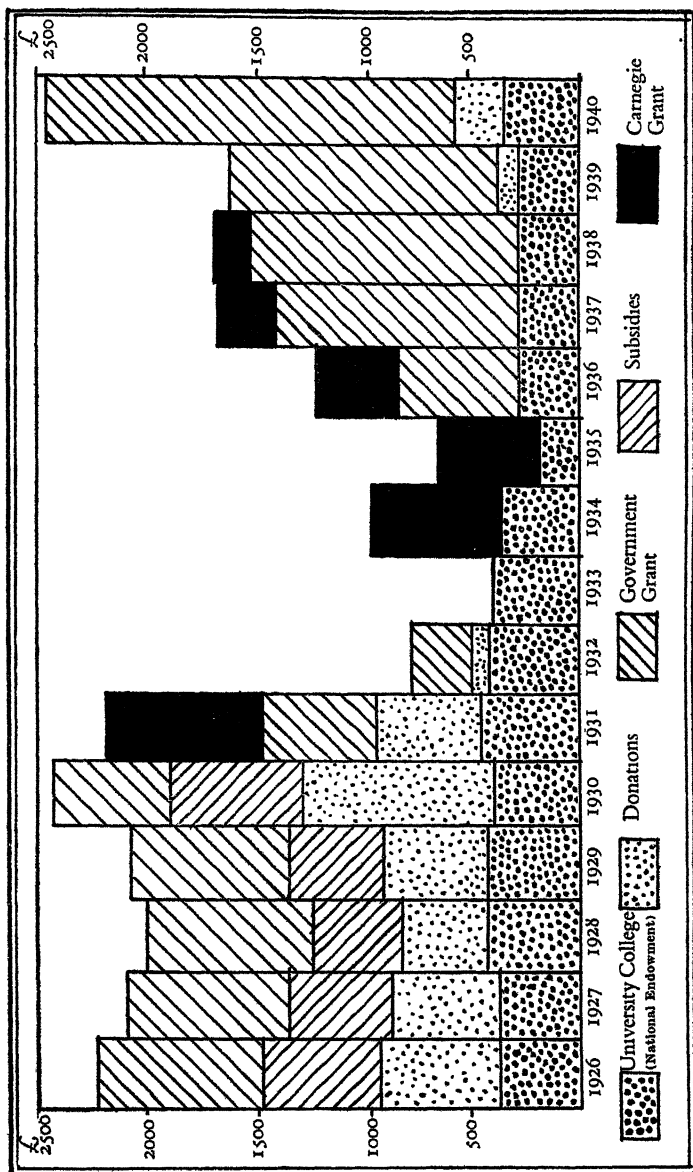


Fig. II Main Sources of Income for Tutorial Classes, Auckland, 1926-40

table does not, of course, indicate the total funds of the district council, but only such amounts as were paid into the tutorial classes fund; nor is it to be assumed that the amounts received in any one year were expended in that year. While figures for other districts would vary to some extent, particularly in the items 'university or university college' and 'donations from district council', the table (and Fig. II) give some idea of the effect of the depression on the finance available for conducting tutorial classes. If the statutory grant and subsidy on donations are considered together, it will be observed that, up until 1931, they had constituted between 50 and 60 per cent of the total income. The effect of the reduction and ultimate withdrawal of these sums is evident for the years 1931-5. The importance of the Carnegie grants is also indicated. The falling-off in donations is partly explained by the fact that, when subsidies were withdrawn, there was no advantage to be derived from the transfer of funds from the district council to the university college, and only in those districts in which reserve funds had been built up was there likely to be any considerable sum available for transfer.

It is not surprising that these financial difficulties left their impression on the movement. The most obvious result was a steady reduction in enrolment; and the gross number of groups and classes, which had steadily increased year by year until 1930, declined⁶ just as steadily from 1930 to 1935. The loss in total student enrolment during these years amounted to over forty per cent. But even this decrease does not indicate fully the magnitude of the harm done. The essentially tutorial work of the WEA took place in the tutorial classes and the short courses. The combined totals for enrolment in these two types of work, in the same period, show a decline of over 55 per cent. As will be observed from Fig. III (which is based on the statistics presented in Table XIV, Appendix III) this loss is masked to some extent by

⁶ See Fig. I, p. 89.

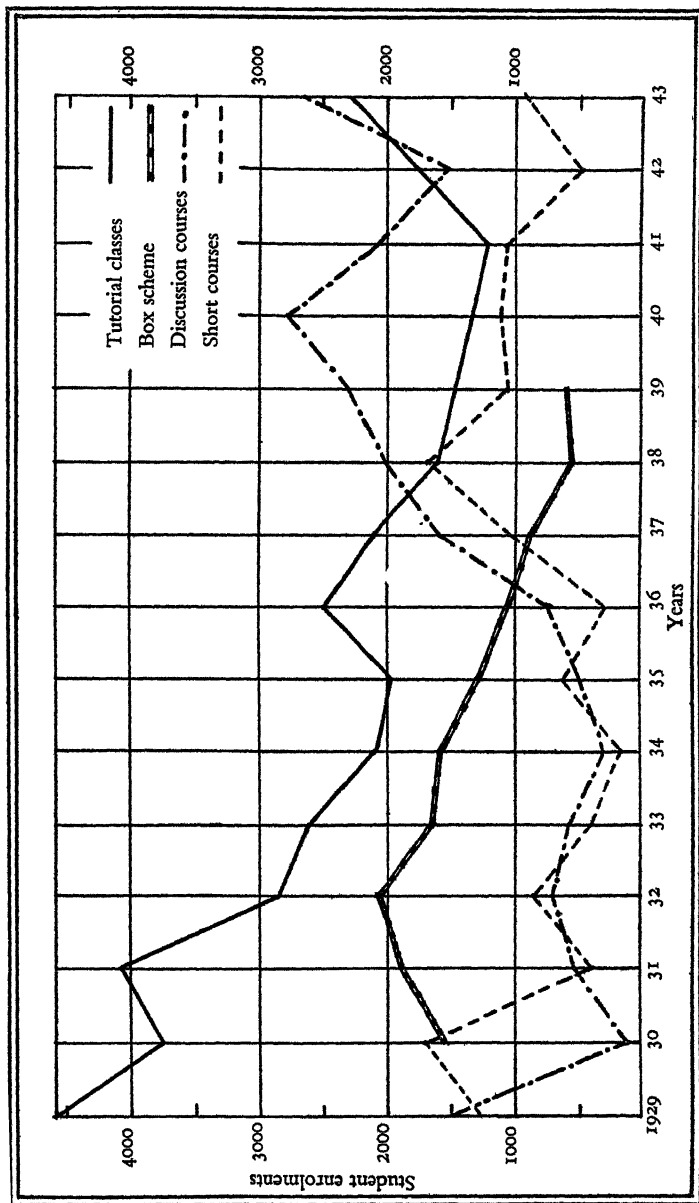


Fig. III Student Enrolment in Various Types of Adult Education, WEA, 1929-43

the smaller decrease in other types of work, and by the peak of box-course enrolments occurring in 1932. Fig. III also shows clearly the decline in tutorial classes and short courses, the relative stability of the box scheme, and the beginnings of the development of discussion groups. The reasons for these changes are relatively easy to find. Tutorial classes and short courses are more expensive than either of the other two types of work. Further, even the few pence required for travelling to and from classes may be sufficient to deter people whose income has been depleted. Since the number of staff-tutors was small, and the amount to cover their travelling expenses difficult to find, tutorial classes,

TABLE II
PERCENTAGE ENROLMENT IN FOUR TYPES OF
CLASSES AND GROUPS, 1929-43

| Year | | | Tutorial Classes | Short Courses | Box Scheme | Discussion, Correspond- ence Groups, etc. |
|------|---|---|---------------------|------------------|---------------|--|
| 1929 | - | - | 62.7 | 17.5 | — | 19.8 |
| 1930 | - | - | 52.5 | 25.0 | 21.0 | 1.5 |
| 1931 | - | - | 58.7 | 6.0 | 28.1 | 7.2 |
| 1932 | - | - | 41.9 | 14.0 | 31.4 | 12.7 |
| 1933 | - | - | 48.4 | 8.9 | 32.0 | 10.7 |
| 1934 | - | - | 49.2 | 5.1 | 38.3 | 7.4 |
| 1935 | - | - | 45.8 | 11.8 | 31.0 | 11.4 |
| 1936 | - | - | 54.9 | 7.1 | 23.3 | 14.7 |
| 1937 | - | - | 37.2 | 18.5 | 15.7 | 28.6 |
| 1938 | - | - | 27.0 | 29.6 | 9.7 | 33.7 |
| 1939 | - | - | 26.8 | 19.7 | 11.5 | 42.0 |
| 1940 | - | - | 26.4 | 21.0 | | 52.6 |
| 1941 | - | - | 29.6 | 23.1 | | 47.3 |
| 1942 | - | - | 43.5 | 13.0 | | 43.5 |
| 1943 | - | - | 37.7 | 14.6 | | 47.7 |

Note : Box-scheme figures not recorded separately for 1929.

with few exceptions, were out of the question in remote areas. When a limited sum of money had to be made to go a long way, small classes were likely to appear extravagant luxuries even to committees strong-minded enough to question the educational value of classes that brought in

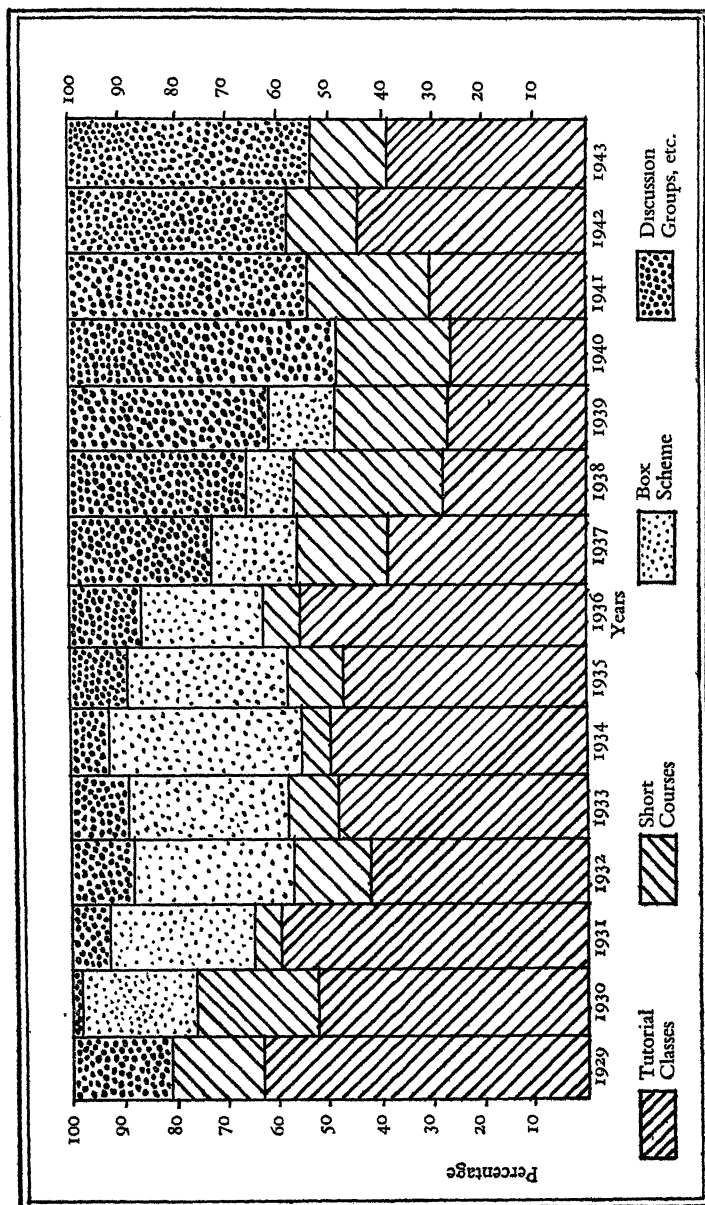


Fig. IV Percentage Distribution of Students, WEA, 1929-43

through fees more than the tutor received in payment.⁷ For country work, therefore, the box-scheme classes and the discussion groups were the only possible means of reaching large numbers. But even these require organizing and, during the worst years, there was scarcely enough money to cover the expenses of an organizer.

To fill out the picture of the changes accelerated by the depression it is necessary to examine the proportion of students enrolled in the various types of classes. In Table II are set out the percentages of total enrolment accounted for by the four types of classes in each of the years 1929-43. In interpreting the figures presented in Table II considerable care is necessary. It should be remembered that the period 1930-35 produced a general shrinkage in enrolments. But, while the percentage enrolment in tutorial classes shows a decline from 52.5 in 1930 to 45.8 in 1935, that for the box scheme shows an increase from 21 to 31 during the same period. As a generalization it may be said that tutorial classes accounted, during the depression years, for less than half the enrolments, and the box scheme for about one-third, while short courses and discussion groups (in about equal parts) contributed to the remainder. The rapid changes that occurred once the grants were restored (from 1936) are largely accounted for by the growth of country work made possible by the appointment of additional staff-tutors. During the depression years energy had to be directed largely to holding as much as possible of what had been gained, and, but for the economies of the period, it is not unlikely that the changes would have been more noticeable at an earlier date. When the figures of Table II are set out in the form of a diagram (Fig. IV), the change in the relative numerical importance of the different types of work sponsored by the WEA during and after the depression becomes more obvious.

⁷ There were some classes of this type. A class of 160 students would, at this time, be almost paying its way. In one or two instances classes were actually sources of considerable income.

The change in the nature of the work undertaken by the WEA is demonstrated even more forcibly in the results obtained from comparing the figures for what may be called 'work of a tutorial type' (tutorial classes and short courses) with those for the non-tutorial type (box courses and discussion groups). These sets of figures (which are extracted from Table XIV, Appendix III) are set out in graphical form (Fig. V). They have been converted into a table of percentages, Table III on p. 124.

From Table III it appears fairly obvious that, so far as the WEA is concerned, the general trend since 1930 has been a decline in the relative size of enrolment in classes as compared with groups; indeed, 'tutorial classes' enrolments have never reached, either absolutely or relatively (to the total work of the WEA), the level of pre-depression years.

An analysis of student enrolment, according to subjects studied during the period 1926-43, has also been attempted, and the results are set out in Table IV. The percentages of total enrolment accounted for by certain groups of studies are based in the main on published returns of the Dominion Council, and the division in some cases appears more or less arbitrary. For example, it is sometimes found difficult to determine whether a particular course of study is most appropriately included under the heading of historical studies, international issues, or New Zealand and Pacific problems. One has to bear in mind, too, that in any one year there is not an infinitely great variety of studies offered for the potential student, and the falling-off in the number studying a particular topic may be accounted for by the withdrawal of a particular course, or its becoming outmoded, the retirement of a particularly popular tutor, the inability of the tutorial classes committee to supply a known demand, the fact that no visit by a class organizer has been possible, and even such local conditions as the night selected for the class meeting. There have been lecturers so attractive as to guarantee an audience whatever the topic selected; there are

others, who, though possessed of profound knowledge, would empty any classroom in which they were placed. It is the operation of factors such as these that makes statistics relating to adult education extremely difficult to interpret.

TABLE III

PERCENTAGE ENROLMENT IN (a) TUTORIAL CLASSES AND SHORT COURSES, COMPARED WITH (b) DISCUSSION, CORRESPONDENCE, STUDY COURSES, AND BOX SCHEME FOR YEARS 1929 TO 1943

| Year | Tutorial classes, etc | Discussion courses, etc | Year | Tutorial classes, etc. | Discussion courses, etc. |
|----------|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1929 - - | 80.2 | 19.8 | 1937 - - | 55.7 | 44.3 |
| 1930 - - | 77.5 | 22.5 | 1938 - - | 56.6 | 43.4 |
| 1931 - - | 64.7 | 35.3 | 1939 - - | 46.5 | 53.5 |
| 1932 - - | 55.9 | 44.1 | 1940 - - | 47.4 | 52.6 |
| 1933 - - | 57.3 | 42.7 | 1941 - - | 52.7 | 47.3 |
| 1934 - - | 54.3 | 45.7 | 1942 - - | 56.5 | 43.5 |
| 1935 - - | 57.6 | 42.4 | 1943 - - | 52.3 | 47.7 |
| 1936 - - | 62.0 | 38.0 | | | |

A concrete, though hypothetical, case may make this point clear. If an evening class were advertised to deal with matters of special interest to mothers of young children, the fact that only three enrolments were received might mean that mothers were not interested; on the other hand, it would probably mean that the people for whom the class was intended either had not heard of it, or could not leave their young children at the time the class was held. In consequence, an analysis of subjects studied by adults cannot be regarded with the same assurance as can an analysis of university or secondary school enrolments.

These reservations being granted, it is possible to notice certain trends during the depression years (1930-35). Approximately fifty per cent of the enrolments fall in the group, literature, art, music, and drama. This includes a considerable number of box-course groups, and some very large classes devoted to the study of literature. The decline after 1935 is accounted for partly by the introduction of new

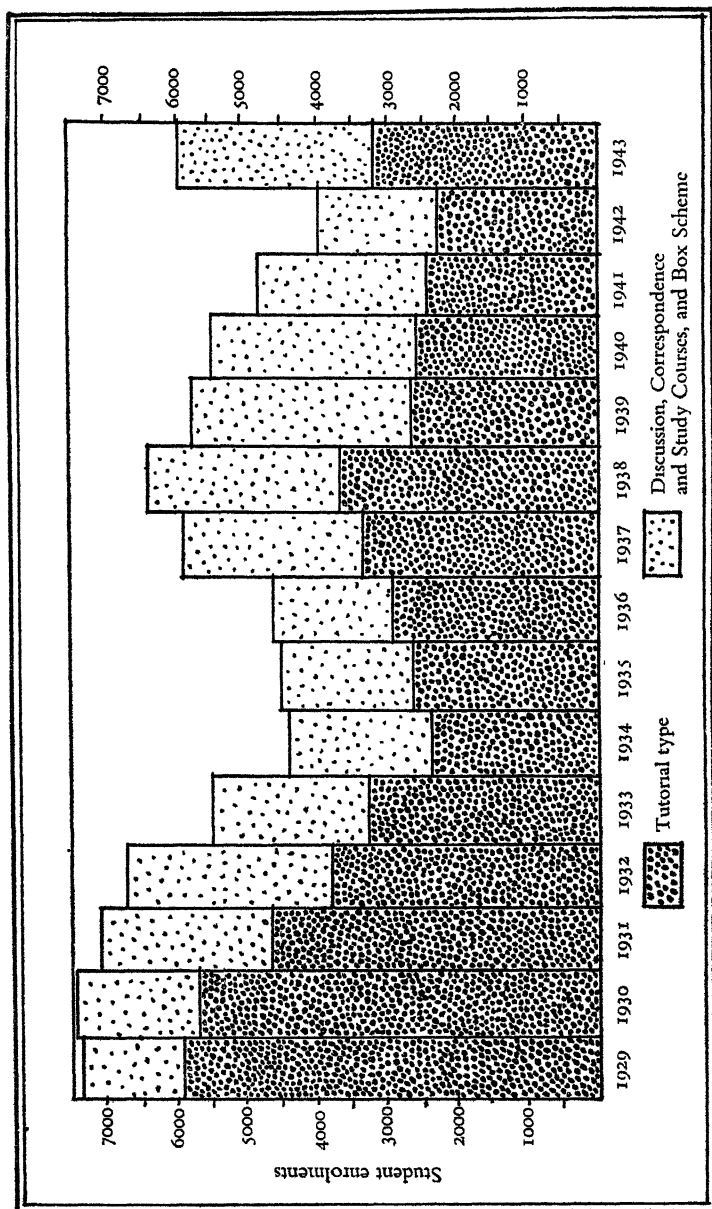


Fig. V Student Enrolment in Two Main Types of Adult Education, WEA, 1929-43

subjects, and partly by the diminishing popularity of the box scheme. The reduction in the *number* of students studying these subjects in 1938, as compared with 1930, was actually only about one-fifth; the relative percentage reduction is about one-half. The continued importance of literature, art, and music, while giving the lie to those ill-informed critics

TABLE IV
PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL STUDENT ENROLMENT STUDYING
CERTAIN GROUPS OF SUBJECTS, 1926 TO 1943

| Year | Sociological studies | International issues | Historical studies | New Zealand and Pacific problems | Literature, art, music, and drama | Philosophy and psychology | Economics and allied subjects | Science | Various | One per cent is approximately: |
|-------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|---------|--------------------------------|
| 1926 | 1.7 | 3.2 | 15.5 | — | 39.6 | 17.5 | 13.8 | 4.9 | 3.8 | 55 |
| 1927 | — | 3.7 | 18.7 | 11.5 | 42.3 | 9.2 | 8.6 | 4.6 | 1.4 | 62 |
| 1928 | — | 3.4 | 3.3 | 7.0 | 38.0 | 25.1 | 7.5 | 5.8 | 9.9 | 67 |
| 1929 | 8.3 | 2.3 | 15.6 | 0.8 | 41.3 | 14.0 | 5.4 | 7.7 | 4.6 | 73 |
| 1930 | 8.3 | 7.1 | 5.4 | 2.6 | 54.8 | 8.8 | 4.5 | 5.4 | 3.1 | 74 |
| 1931 | 12.9 | 6.6 | 3.1 | 6.0 | 47.7 | 4.3 | 8.9 | 3.6 | 6.9 | 70 |
| 1932 | 1.2 | 14.8 | 3.5 | 2.0 | 46.4 | 4.7 | 13.1 | 3.2 | 11.1 | 66 |
| 1933 | 0.4 | 11.1 | 3.0 | — | 47.9 | 8.4 | 15.6 | 2.5 | 11.1 | 55 |
| 1934 | — | 10.4 | 4.3 | — | 49.1 | 10.4 | 11.5 | 3.8 | 10.5 | 44 |
| 1935 | 1.5 | 14.7 | 4.5 | 1.5 | 58.1 | 8.2 | 4.6 | 1.4 | 5.5 | 44 |
| 1936 | 0.2 | 14.6 | 2.8 | 0.3 | 47.6 | 10.1 | 9.6 | 2.8 | 12.0 | 45 |
| 1937 | 7.5 | 13.9 | — | 15.3 | 34.9 | 10.3 | 4.2 | 2.1 | 11.8 | 58 |
| 1938 | 10.2 | 34.6 | — | — | 25.8 | 11.5 | 7.9 | 4.7 | 5.3 | 63 |
| 1939 | 14.4 | 17.0 | — | 9.2 | 29.8 | 9.4 | 9.4 | 10.8 ^a | — | 57 |
| 1940 | 15.2 | 23.8 | — | 4.6 | 31.0 | 9.2 | 5.7 | 10.5 ^a | — | 53 |
| 1941 | 18.7 | 28.6 | — | — | 22.5 | 12.7 | 5.7 | 11.8 ^a | — | 47 |
| 1943 ^b | 11.7 | 26.0 | — | — | 29.1 | 16.7 | 5.5 | 11.0 ^a | — | 60 |

Notes: ^a Separate returns not available in these years.

^b Figures for 1942 not available.

who have asserted that the WEA is chiefly or solely concerned with the propagation of particular economic doctrines, has been the subject of considerable criticism from some 'left wingers', who have considered that the study of literature for aesthetic enjoyment is merely a means of escape from the realities of social problems. It is not possible

to indicate what proportion of work under the heading 'drama' consisted of actual participation in dramatic production either as performer or audience. A large part probably consisted of talks about drama, illustrated by the reading of excerpts from plays. New Zealand had, since 1920, shared in the revival of amateur play production, and the WEA, through the lending of sets of plays and the formation of dramatic clubs, played a considerable part in this revival.⁸ Much dramatic work, occurring outside of the ordinary tutorial classes, is not represented in the official figures. There is, however, some justification for believing that, during the depression years, some of the classes considered in this paragraph did come perilously near to providing cheap entertainment. Whether this is to be regarded as a disadvantage is a matter that must for the moment be deferred.

The table under discussion shows an increase in the relative enrolment in economics classes during the years 1932, 1933, and 1934, and a falling-off thereafter. Those familiar with public discussion during the depression years will recall the bewilderment that beset people in many walks of life when the magnitude of the financial decline became apparent.⁹ Temporarily, at least, it seemed that the difficulties could be met by the method of improvisation that Siegfried had noted as a New Zealand characteristic a quarter of a century earlier. Some turned to the study of economics as possibly able to give the solution of the problems of the depression in six short lessons. Finding that economics was a much more complicated study than they had imagined, and failing to find in it simple solutions to complex problems, not a few went off in search of strange gods, seizing avidly on the first plausible theory that was

⁸ This applies particularly to Auckland and Canterbury, in both of which districts emphasis has been placed on practical work in drama

⁹ Lloyd Ross tells the story of the business man who telephoned him one morning with the query, 'What is the cause of the slump?'

preached with sufficient urgency. Lloyd Ross, at that time a tutor in Otago, wrote in 1932:

So when at last we had to recognize the fact that we were really influenced by world movements, we had no background of training and knowledge to help us investigate the real and complicated causes at work, and so we read and believed naive currency theories; and when we found that men had been studying for years at the universities and wasting so much time gathering statistics and reading books that we could not understand, instead of dogmatizing on simple solutions, we felt that economics was a gigantic bluff of a few people to make themselves important.¹⁰

The hopes and disappointments of those who sought easy answers are probably reflected in the rise and fall of the proportionate enrolment in this subject during the depression years.

The development of the study of international affairs is to be expected when one recalls the many important events of the ten years that preceded World War II. In contrast is the decline in interest both in historical studies and in New Zealand and Pacific problems. The rise of fascism in Europe, events in Russia, problems of peace and international co-operation, were studied in WEA classes, sometimes at the risk of considerable unpopularity, in a period when freedom of speech was seriously threatened. Many topics at that time considered dangerous or subversive would have attracted little attention six years later. It is not easy to think oneself back through ten years of time into an environment in which a public servant who dared to express criticism of Government action might be dismissed without right of appeal, and where mention of anything good in Russia would have been sufficient to set the conservatives in the community howling for the dismissal of a university lecturer.

¹⁰ Ross, Lloyd. 'Adult Education and the Depression in New Zealand', *International Quarterly of Adult Education*, June 1932.

Over and above the work to which the figures in Table IV refer were many other activities of the WEA. During this time the Association was experimenting in the use of the radio as a means of adult education, and a good deal of thought had been given to the formation of listening groups in country areas. Even in the thirties broadcasting was an important potential factor in education. The number of receiving licences rose from about 53,000 in 1930 to more than three times that number in 1936, when there was one licence for every nine persons resident in the Dominion. For some years regular thirty-minute sessions were arranged by the WEA twice a week from each of the four national stations. A Dominion committee had been set up to co-ordinate the work, and experiments were conducted to ascertain the best technique for the new medium. However, difficulties were always likely to arise over the interpretation of the 'non-controversial' clause in the regulations, and in 1934 the Broadcasting Board cancelled the arrangement with the WEA. Had the Board embarked on any courageous scheme of significant discussion of matters of moment, there could be little objection to the termination of the WEA sessions. As it was, caution rather than adventure became the main feature of broadcasts designed for the enlightenment of adults.

The depression revealed both the strength and the weakness of the movement. Its strength lay in the spirit of self-sacrifice that actuated many of those—both staff and honorary administrators—who kept adult education alive during these difficult years. Most of those who had accepted full-time appointments, and most of the part-time tutors, were encouraged to battle against all kinds of difficulties only by a sense of the social significance of their work. The WEA offered few prospects of a lucrative career; security of tenure was lacking; there was an exasperating feeling of frustration; and more than one tutor, remembering his own lack of spare time, must have reflected on the irony of the

slogan, 'education for leisure'. Some of the staunchest supporters of the WEA today are students who entered the movement at this time. But in recalling the many achievements of the period—the initiative that suggested ways of doing things without financial resources, the self-help that kept country groups alive when no tutor was available, the co-operative activities that gave a sense of social purpose to adult education, the comradeship bred of adversity—some have been inclined to regard as extravagant the demand for better equipment and more funds. It is one thing to admit that good work was done under adverse conditions; quite another to accept those conditions as necessary or permanent.

The depression revealed weaknesses in the organization of the movement. It demonstrated, for example, the precarious financial foundation on which the WEA rested, and the disaster that could overcome a movement so pitifully supported that retrenchment meant not a proportionate diminution of services, but the denial of all but a skeleton service in some country areas. True, the development of discussion course techniques and the box scheme enabled some country work to continue; but it was for the most part a mere shadow of what might have been possible had even a fraction of the Government grants remained. That the one national organization for adult education could be so jeopardized, even in a time of depression, was indicative of a lack of any real faith in adult education among a large section of the community. If it were not for the fact that other branches of education suffered grievously, one would be tempted to offer the suggestion that the process of acclimatization had not been complete, and that the WEA, not being an institution of indigenous growth, had neither the deep roots of its English prototype, nor the firm foundation in national culture that had preserved the Danish Folk High Schools through more than half a century.

It was not only apathy that the WEA had to contend with; direct antagonism was not uncommon. Certain ugly

features in New Zealand political life at this time readily suggested, at least to those most affected, the worst forms of militant reaction, and gave colour to the views of a small but active minority within the WEA for whom the doctrine of 'the class struggle' was the key to the understanding of world events. Even those who held much less-defined views shared the suspicion that, in the treatment which the WEA had received, 'motives of economy were not unmingled with a desire to be rid of an educational agency shown by experience to encourage inconvenient thinking'.¹¹ While Marxian political or economic theory was certainly not officially accepted by the WEA, nor even representative of the private opinion of the majority of tutors or students, there were in adult classes many critics of the turn that events had taken. So bitter was the feeling at the time, that any critical or 'inconvenient' thinking among individuals in the movement was quickly labelled 'red', and seized upon by the opponents of the WEA as evidence to support their preconception that it was a subversive organization. There is, however, little evidence that tutors, in the course of their official duties, attempted to engage in propaganda on behalf of their private beliefs. Charges that they did so were nearly always made by those with little first-hand knowledge of the WEA. It is, of course, true that some who joined the movement, particularly during the depression years, held strong leftist views, and they probably expressed them freely in the course of discussion. The presence of such students at times caused annoyance to those whose political beliefs lay more to the right, and indeed to some who had been students in WEA classes for many years. But it must never be forgotten that, even at this time, the WEA was still regarded by the extreme left as a capitalist organization designed to distract the attention of the worker from a real study of social problems.

¹¹ Richmond, N. M. 'Workers' Education in New Zealand', an article in the *International Labour Review*, April 1938. (Reprinted in the *Australian Highway*, Vol. XX, 1938.)

The atmosphere of the times produced much heart-searching within the movement. The most striking instance of this occurred in 1936, in Auckland, where N. M. Richmond, Director of Tutorial Classes, had embarked on a policy of making the WEA into what he considered to be a genuine workers' organization. Richmond had developed his ideas over a period of years. When, at the end of 1935, with the election of a Labour Government, there appeared some prospect of a more sympathetic treatment of adult education, it seemed to him that, in the post-slump reconstruction, the WEA stood at the crossroads. On the one hand lay the path of general adult education, which was in danger of becoming 'middle-class academicism'; on the other lay the path of salvation along which the WEA could regain its vitality 'by becoming once again a *workers'* organization, in which the pressure of needs and ideas and demands that workers have in common will inevitably produce the working-class basis we desire'.¹² Richmond's views, originally expounded in the journal *Tomorrow*¹³, were given further publicity both by the ensuing discussion in that periodical and by the circulation of the original article, together with critical comments, among members of WEA discussion groups. They were also embodied in a lengthy memorandum submitted to the University Senate Committee on adult education. Some two years later an article by Richmond on 'Workers' Education in New Zealand' which appeared in the *International Labour Review* was reprinted in the *Australian Highway*.

The central idea in Richmond's critical examination of the WEA was the doctrine that 'education is above all a force in social change'.¹⁴

¹² Quoted by Richmond from a comment made by W. A. Sewell on an earlier article by Richmond.

¹³ 18 March 1936.

¹⁴ Owing to the changes that appear to have taken place in his suggested solution of the problem, it is difficult to avoid misrepresentation of Richmond's views in a short summary. In his memorandum to the Senate Committee, for example, he stated that his *Tomorrow* article was a deliberate over-statement. Those interested are referred to his own statement in the articles already mentioned.

The struggle for a world fit for human beings to live in is one struggle, in which politics and economics, science, art and literature present a united front. And . . . any approach to these fields which is to have reality for the men and women who ought to form the backbone of our movement must be integrally related to this struggle. The fact that such a backbone is on the whole lacking may . . . be connected with the comparative absence of such an approach.

From time to time Richmond appears to have shifted his ground slightly. But in the main his contention (largely implied, it must be admitted) was that adult education should become an active force in producing a particular kind of social change. If courses were designed with this end in view, the movement would attract to it those who were seriously concerned with the conflicts and contradictions of present society. This, of course, would have meant a radical departure from the professed aims of the WEA as an organization, and critics among his colleagues, even those who had a considerable amount of sympathy for some of his views, were quick to point out that, if propaganda of one type was admitted, propaganda of another kind could not logically be debarred. It was contended, too, that, if those who held such views cared to set up their own educational organization on the lines of the National Council of Labour Colleges, they could start from some such Marxian basis; but the WEA had to be an organization which might be tolerated and supported by a liberal State, and, if it were desired to deprive the WEA of its special role in social change, the best way to do so would be to make it a socialist propagandist body. In short, there were not many prepared to accept without qualifications either the premisses or the conclusions that had been put forward; and one senses in the general thesis an over-simplified interpretation of New Zealand life. The discussion, however, had important consequences. On the one hand, within the movement itself it did much to focus attention on the aims and methods of the WEA. Outside the movement, its effects were less fortunate;

there was a tendency to take as representative of the whole movement views that were, at most, the personal opinions of a small section, and to mistake for official policy what had been merely sketched as a possible line of action. Such misapprehensions are always likely to occur when the full-time staff of the movement is so small; then the views of one man may be the views of the only permanent tutor in a district. In some quarters the WEA has, after more than six years, hardly lived down the extravagant distortions that surrounded this discussion.

Very little practical result came out of the effort to make the movement into a 'workers' movement' in Richmond's sense. At a large meeting of unionists in the Auckland Trades Hall those present were urged to 'build up a real trade union WEA and yours will be the knowledge that is power'. A committee was set up at this meeting to discover topics of interest to trade unionists, and in the following year a voluntary organizer succeeded in producing a temporary increase in union affiliations. A resolution of the revived Federation of Labour urged unions to encourage their members to link up with the WEA. That was about all. The permanent results must have been disappointing to those who had hoped to see 'the WEA at the crossroads' take the turning towards 'workers' education'. Organized labour, now subject to compulsory unionism, showed no very great desire for adult education of this or any other kind. The academic sponsors of the 'workers' education' plan, looking at organized labour from the outside, perhaps saw more than was actually there. Pious resolutions and official affiliation were no guarantee of renewed interest. The WEA, it seemed, remained at the crossroads.

EDUCATION OF COUNTRY WOMEN

Despite the depression of 1930-35 (or because of it) the two great organizations of country women, which are

among the most important influences affecting the quality of rural life, steadily developed. While the Women's Institutes (WIs) and the Women's Divisions of the Farmers' Union (WDs) were, in relation to formal adult education, consumers rather than purveyors, their potential significance cannot be neglected in any picture of this period.

The Women's Institute movement, which had its origin in Canada, was established in New Zealand in 1921, largely owing to the efforts of Miss A. E. Jerome Spencer, who had been struck with the possibilities of the English version of the Canadian invention. Throughout their history the Institutes have aimed at improving the conditions of rural life. By 1932 the movement claimed a membership of about 30,000 women organized in over 600 Institutes. In 1935 there were over 800 Institutes. Membership is limited to those residing in the country or in towns of a population below 4,000. Locally the Institutes had been banded together in Federations, while in the early days of the depression these became more fully co-ordinated in a National Federation. The Women's Division arose in 1925 as the result of revelations made by an organizer of the Farmers' Union at a conference of that body. In an address that caused considerable discussion the organizer drew attention to the isolation of country women, and the difficulties that many of them experienced in obtaining help in times of emergency. The story of the Women's Division, which cannot be fully told here, is one of co-operative effort in lightening the burden of farmers' wives through the provision of an emergency housekeeping scheme, a rest home where sick or tired country women can receive care¹⁵, and a community chest from which help can be given to necessitous cases. Originally having as a condition of membership some

¹⁵ At the outbreak of the present war the Dominion Headquarters and local branches gave full-time employment to a housekeeping-staff of over 100. The rest home at Awapuni, Palmerston North, has proved so successful that recently two similar rest homes have recently been established in the South Island.

connection with land ownership or farming, the WDs broadened their membership as time went on.

While there are certain technical differences between the WIs and the WDs, the former, for example, being professedly more concerned with education (in its broadest sense), and the latter more with self-help and philanthropy, these differences are more apparent to those in the movements than to outsiders. Though many women are members of both organizations, there is a certain watchfulness as between the two, and the country educational organizer seeking to form a women's committee to assist him is always wise to include equal numbers of WI and WD members. The existence of the two distinct bodies has, on occasion, produced difficulties, particularly since the organizational areas, the 'provinces' (WD) and 'federation districts' (WI) do not always coincide. A movement for the fusion of the two bodies, which has a lengthy history, has produced no great results. However, on the suggestion of Mrs. Alfred Watt, of the Association of Country Women of the World, a Co-ordinating Committee was set up in 1936. When Government adult education grants were restored after the depression, funds were made available to the national Women's Co-ordinating Committee and not to the separate bodies.¹⁶ The Women's Co-ordinating Committee has at different times employed a number of full-time tutors in domestic science, dressmaking, and gardening, and part-time tutors in choir and drama work.

Not only have the Institutes and Divisions represented the views of country women in the discussions of the National Council of Women, but they have exercised a profound influence on the lives of women shut off from the social contacts of town life. They have given to country women a new sense of purpose, and opportunity for training

¹⁶ Mention will be made elsewhere of certain weaknesses that arise from this practice. The most effective co-ordination occurs at the level of the university college districts.

in organization, self-government, and the rational discussion of live problems. They have discovered some community leaders of the highest order who, on assuming Federation or National office, have had to travel from one branch to another, and have done much to break down the inherent parochialism of country life.

Monthly meetings of the Institutes and Divisions have done much to broaden the interests of members. Handicraft and home-crafts, music and drama, instruction in health and nursing, together with short talks on various subjects, have been the staple educational fare—not profound, it is true, but at least stimulating. Apart from lecture-demonstrations organized by the Home Science Extension Department of Otago and by similar bodies to be described shortly, much of the work done by the Institutes and Divisions was, at this period, accomplished by the process of pooling the resources and knowledge of the members.¹⁷ By the end of the depression there was more than a suspicion that this process of self-instruction had almost reached its limit, and that some stimulus from outside the movement would be not only desirable, but (if tactfully supplied) genuinely welcomed.¹⁸ It was quickly found, however, that successful work with these organizations required a special knowledge of the nature and outlook of their members, and that it could not be undertaken in any spirit of patronage; nor were they likely to welcome concentrated instruction offered in large doses at a time. In some districts there was not only a well-warranted distrust of anything smacking of intellectual slumming, but a fairly obvious suspicion, as well, of an academic approach to practical problems.

¹⁷ In some cases classes (e.g. in dressmaking) were provided by Education Boards under the Manual and Technical Regulations.

¹⁸ The display of craftwork at the Centennial Exhibition, while showing much that was good, showed, as well, much that was little more than 'making rubbish out of rubbish'. An instance that comes to mind was a watch-chain made of human hair!

It is now necessary to notice two experimental developments in rural adult education that took place during the depression years. Mention was made earlier of the provision of Carnegie funds for the Canterbury Adult Rural (CAR) scheme and for the Home Science Extension (HSE) work conducted by Otago University. The latter, after an initial phase of exploratory work, made good headway during the years 1930-34. This success had not been won without a considerable amount of perseverance. In 1930 a provincial president and organizer of one of the women's rural movements stated publicly, and with agreement from a section of her audience, that 'the country women of Otago and Southland would be helped far more by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, if the £1500 it proposed spending on the Home Science Extension service were divided up and each woman given her share—approximately 1/6'. That attitude, however, soon changed. From the beginning the HSE adopted the plan of working through existing women's organizations such as the Women's Institutes and Women's Divisions, and members of the Home Science staff gave assistance to organizers of the two movements. Use was made also of the press and the radio, and regular HSE sessions quickly became a feature of New Zealand broadcasting. The box scheme technique was adapted to the special needs of home science teaching, and upwards of 100 groups were in operation in 1933. Lecture demonstrations were arranged on such topics as food values, preserving, house and kitchen planning, dressmaking, and furniture repairs. Among other experiments were the establishment of an information bureau, the formation of 'bottling clubs' among girls, and the conducting of leaders' schools, designed to give training in the use of lecture material to members of the Institutes and Divisions. In short, by 1934 a very thorough endeavour had been made to carry out the intention of the Carnegie

Corporation by investigating all the possible methods of reaching country women.¹⁹

Towards the end of the five-year period the Carnegie Corporation signified its willingness to consider proposals for financing a unified scheme embracing the whole of New Zealand. For some reason no such Dominion-wide plan was forthcoming, but the directors of extension work in Otago and Canterbury university districts agreed on a fusion of the HSE scheme and the CAR scheme. Thus there came into being in 1935 the Association for Country Education (ACE), financed for five years by a Carnegie Corporation grant providing £3,000 for the first year, with amounts diminishing by £500 annually for the remaining four years. From 1940 onwards, the scheme was expected to be self-supporting. Owing to the rate of exchange, the amounts received were approximately twenty-five per cent higher than the nominal amount.

These new financial arrangements emphasized the necessity of organizing the work of the ACE so as to obtain a source of income and to build up reserves which would allow the Association to be placed on a permanent basis. Certain changes in policy were required. In order to establish the separate entity of the Association, classes were now organized directly under the ACE, though every opportunity was still taken to co-operate with existing agencies. Groups formed for study or organization elected their own leaders, and came under the control of the Association. To prevent overlapping with other organizations the ACE confined its activities to rural districts, and did not operate in cities or in towns of over 4,000 inhabitants. Whereas in the early period a great deal of HSE work had been done without fees, it was now decided that fees should be charged for all ACE services.

¹⁹ The author is indebted to Miss Violet Macmillan, formerly of the Home Science Extension Department of Otago University, for much of the material on which this section is based.

The work of the new Association embodied, in addition to the usual home science activities, a country library service and a scheme for the development of community drama. For the final eighteen months of Carnegie support, and after the library scheme had been taken over by the Government, a trained child psychologist was stationed in country areas, where she conducted valuable work among mothers of small children and among senior pupils of rural high schools.²⁰ The objects of the ACE have been officially described as follows:

It aims at providing a channel whereby rural women may secure scientific and practical advice to assist them in building and maintaining the health and stamina of their families. It gives ideas and practical advice [on] how to plan, decorate, and run convenient and comfortable artistic homes. It provides facilities for [guiding] the young woman as she prepares herself for her life's work as manager of a home. It enables country readers to secure worthwhile books which many cannot afford to buy. It provides training in acting and production of plays, and draws all sections of the community into drama and study groups.

An account of the more recent work of the ACE will be given later; for the present it may be noted that here at last was an attempt to demonstrate what could be done in a particular area, without spoiling the work by attempting to spread too little too far. It possessed, for a clearly-defined district, perhaps not adequate staff, but at least a full-time organizer, four full-time tutors, a travelling librarian, and a drama tutor, as well as office assistance—in all, a full-time staff much larger than that employed in 1935 for the whole of the WEA work of the Dominion. It had, too, a clearly marked field—the rural community—and behind it lay the resources of information and expert advice of the Home Science Department of Otago University. To stress the favourable conditions under which it commenced operations

²⁰ Work initiated at Rangiora still continues, and the psychologist has subsequently carried on work as a part-time teacher in several high schools, and, in adult education, has initiated in Christchurch three part-time nursery play-centres and has given school girls theoretical and practical training in child care.

is not to suggest that there were no problems or that the work was easy. But the whole conception of the scheme and its efficient organization constituted something new in the history of adult education in this country, and were themselves a tribute to the vision of its founders. If only a similar concentration of funds and objects could have been attempted at other times and places, adult education might have presented a different picture today. As it is, one feels that the method of financing adult education has somewhat resembled the method proposed by the good lady quoted earlier in this chapter.

Work of a similar nature to that undertaken by the HSE was carried out in the North Island by the Sarah Anne Rhodes Fellowship, operating from Massey Agricultural College, Palmerston North. Under the terms of the will of Mrs. Sarah Anne Rhodes, of Wellington, a trust fund of £10,000 was bequeathed to Victoria University College for the education of women. Provision was made either for a travelling fellowship in such subjects as dietetics, or for a scholarship to enable a deserving student to pursue her studies in home science at Otago University. In 1930 a change took place in the administration of the fund, and a lecturing fellowship was established. A home science graduate who had been awarded a travelling fellowship enabling her to visit America, England, and various European countries, was in 1932 appointed to carry out extension work in the Victoria University District, with headquarters at Massey College. This district is a very large one, including in its boundaries the provincial districts of Taranaki, Hawke's Bay, Wellington, Marlborough, and Nelson, with a combined population of about 550,000. Geographically divided by Cook Strait, it has never been an easy area to work as a unit. Despite this, and the fact that the staffing of the North Island venture has never been on such a liberal scale as that of the Otago scheme, useful work has been done, and from 1932 lecture-demonstrations, public addresses, study classes, and

short courses, have dealt with diet, nutrition, crafts, home-making, and dressmaking, on lines somewhat similar to those developed in the South.

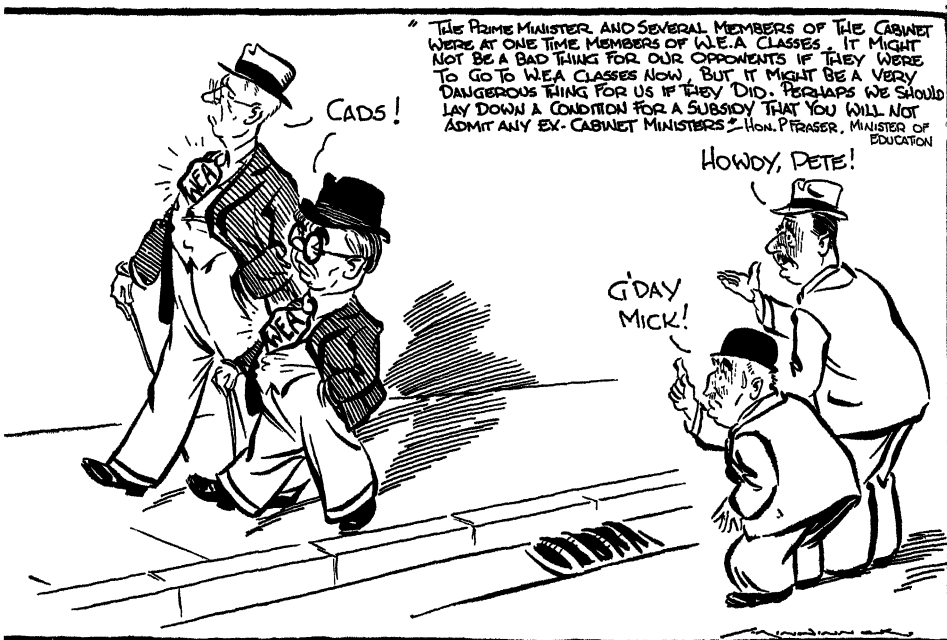
Notwithstanding the severe testing-time through which adult education had passed during the depression years, there was a feeling that, having survived this ordeal, the movement would develop rapidly once good times arrived. By 1935 there was some evidence that the turn of the corner, long promised in vain, had at last occurred. This feeling of anticipation was heightened by a change of Government that came about late in that year.



AUCKLAND MECHANICS' INSTITUTE

(From a water-colour by W Wright, by permission of Mr John Barr)

THE BUILDING SERVED AS A COMMUNITY CENTRE AND AS THE MAIN
LIBRARY OF THE CITY FOR THIRTY-SEVEN YEARS



"THE OLD SCHOOL TIE."

ALZ. HERALD, APRIL 21ST 1936
ON THE OCCASION OF THE
21ST BIRTHDAY OF THE W.E.A.

CHAPTER VII

New Prospects After 1935

* ————— *

THE new Government that was elected in 1935 was known to be sympathetically inclined towards adult education. Indeed, some of the leading figures among the Labour members had been students of the WEA in the early days of its existence.¹ A cartoon published in one of the largest dailies depicted two members of the Cabinet proudly wearing old school ties on which were the initials of the Association. It was clear, too, that the financial position of the country was improving, and that more money would be available for public services. In these circumstances it is scarcely surprising that the Hon. Peter Fraser, on assuming the portfolio of Education, found himself inundated with requests for assistance. To decide the relative importance of the many claims, and to ensure that public money was not wasted, was an extremely difficult task, and the Minister wisely made it clear that he could not consider requests for assistance for adult education as long as there was overlapping of the work of different organizing bodies. The Dominion Council of the WEA was therefore invited to call a conference of all organizations engaged in adult

¹ E.g. M. J. Savage, Peter Fraser, E. J. Howard, and James Thorn. H. E. Holland, the former leader of the party, had also been prominent, while in the Upper House there were several among later appointees, including Hons. Bernard Martin and J. Rigg.

education. This conference was held in Christchurch in April 1936, and was attended by representatives of the Workers' Educational Association, the Association for Country Education, the Women's Institutes, the Women's Division of the Farmers' Union, the British Drama League, and the University Senate. A scheme put forward by the Canterbury WEA suggested a division of work whereby the WEA was to provide 'general cultural education', the ACE arts, crafts, and domestic science, and the British Drama League drama festivals. Discussion of this proposal revealed considerable difference of opinion, and showed the District Councils of the WEA to be opposed to the setting up of a national council with real powers. It was finally decided that the Minister of Education be asked 'to invite the University to set up a Committee (not wholly consisting of representatives from the University) to prepare a comprehensive scheme for adult education in New Zealand'.² In the meantime the Minister should be recommended 'to provide funds for the WEA on the basis of the estimate already presented to him by the Dominion Secretary of the WEA'. To these two proposals of the Conference the Minister agreed. As the matter was urgent, the Executive Committee of the Senate appointed a Committee in June 1936, and the report³ of this Committee was presented to Senate at its meeting early in 1937.

The Committee interpreted the term adult education 'to include all educational activities which, being cultural and non-vocational, cater for members of the adult population who are not in a position to become regular students at University Colleges or other educational institutions'. After emphasizing the importance of education as a life-long process, the report continued:

It is the function of adult education to help the individual to discover what his particular contribution can be. Especially in a country like New Zealand, above all at a time such as the present,

² Minutes of Conference, 16 April 1936.

³ *Minutes of Senate*, January 1937. 59 ff.

our duty is deliberately, with ability and earnestness, to examine the principles on which we wish to live, whether we seek these principles through the medium of politics, or economics, or literature, or art, or science, or drama, or music.

Education of this scope cannot be achieved merely by amiable intentions. Goodwill without mental effort is useless. Such education calls for conscious planning and hard thinking. It must utilize all the resources of technique which modern science has made available. Broadcasting and the cinema, to mention two only, must be harnessed to the needs of education; their possibilities are boundless. Such education calls to its service the very best men and women available, and for their best enthusiasm. The education which comes from these conditions will be exciting, transforming, revolutionary in the best and profoundest sense.

The Committee reviewed very briefly the various major agencies of adult education, and gave special attention to the problem of co-ordination:

To allow each organization to pursue and develop its own activities independently would be both wasteful and inefficient: overlapping would be inevitable and there would be no guarantee that each organization was doing that work for which it was best fitted. . . . Moreover, in many cases co-ordination between different organizations is necessary in order to achieve the best results. For example, it may be found that certain needs of Women's Institutes may be best met by tutors or other assistance from the WEA or the ACE. The National Broadcasting Service, besides doing educational work on its own account, can render great assistance as an adjunct to classes controlled by other bodies. In England the Broadcasting Service has built up an extensive educational service with its own tutors and organizers. It is a matter for serious consideration by the co-ordinating body to what extent any such service should in New Zealand be independent or should be linked up with the activities of other organizations. Further there is an opportunity for co-operation between the Education Department and other educational bodies in the matter of physical education. . . .

In making its recommendations the Committee considered that there should be 'permanent machinery for the

co-ordination of adult educational activities' but that co-ordination could be achieved 'only by a permanent body which keeps in constant touch with the work of the agencies concerned'. To ensure this, a scheme was outlined as follows:

(1) A *Council of Adult Education* of five members was recommended—an appointee of the Minister; the Director of Broadcasting for the time being; one member appointed by the Dominion Council of the WEA; and two members appointed by the Senate, of whom at least one should not be a member of the Senate. Appointed members were to hold office for three years and to be eligible for re-election.

The functions of the Council were to be: (i) To co-ordinate the different activities of adult education, and to take any action it might consider desirable to further the interests of adult education.

(ii) To recommend to the Minister of Education the amount of the annual grant for adult education to be paid to the University of New Zealand.

(iii) (a) To receive and to consider recommendations from the university college councils and from the recognized agencies; (b) To allocate the grant among such councils or agencies engaged in adult education as the Council may determine.

(iv) To receive annual reports from the university college councils and from other bodies to whom grants for adult education are made.

(v) To furnish an annual report to the Minister of Education and to the Senate of the University.

(2) *Committees of Adult Education*. In connection with each of the four university colleges there was to be a committee composed (in the first instance) of three members appointed by the council of the college; three members appointed by the district council of the WEA; together with such further members as the college council might appoint to represent other agencies associated with the work of adult education. The recommendation called for annual review by the college council of the membership of the committee, the college council having the right to add to or alter the membership either on the recommendation of the committee or on the appeal of an organization.

The functions of a committee were specified as follows:

- (i) To promote the co-ordination of the activities in its university college district; to make recommendations to the university college council as to the best use of tutors and other officers; and in respect of both these functions to co-operate, if desired, with the Committee of another university college district.
- (ii) To recommend to the university college council the method of expenditure of the funds available for adult education in the district.
- (iii) To make recommendations to the university college council in regard to the appointment of additional members of the Committee.
- (iv) To receive and consider requests for assistance from organizations engaged, or proposing to engage, in adult education in the university college district and to make recommendations thereon to the college council.
- (v) To receive reports from the organizations obtaining grants for adult education in its district and to forward them to the university college council.
- (vi) To furnish an annual report to the university college council.

Even if it could scarcely be said to embody a 'comprehensive scheme for adult education', the report was in many ways a good one. It sought to bring a degree of order out of a confused situation, and the proposed Council of Adult Education might reasonably have been supposed to provide some guarantee of continued and coherent policy. At least it would now be somebody's business to review the whole field of adult education.

There are, however, one or two points that call for comment. The Senate Committee drew attention to the fact that the proposed Council was to be given other functions besides those of co-ordination; it was to be an advisory body making recommendations to the Minister on the amount of grants for adult education, and keeping the University informed (through annual reports) of the general progress of adult education. Probably bearing in mind the

opposition of the WEA to any suggestion of central control, the Senate Committee made one point definite. The Council and local committees were not to be executive bodies: 'It is not intended that either the Council or the Local Committees should themselves carry on organized educational activities or should interfere in the work of bodies carrying on these activities.' It is reasonably clear that the interference that the Committee wished to avoid was the detailed direction and supervision of the work of other bodies. At the same time, it must have occurred to members of the Committee that the making or withholding of grants is, in the long run, a pretty effective way of interfering in the work of bodies, as the history of the WEA amply demonstrates; and the recommending of such action lay with the proposed Council and committees. If the local committees were not to carry on organized educational activities, the Senate Committee might at least have indicated how gaps in the provision of adult education were to be filled. What, for instance, was to be the agency for supplying general adult education not already provided for? The Committee neither advocated the setting up of extension departments within the colleges, nor offered any alternative to the local committees as executive bodies. As things turned out, failure to solve this problem prevented the Council and committees from remaining as neutral as the Senate Committee intended them to be; for they have in some instances been forced to become bodies providing adult education.

Even less satisfactory was the endeavour of the Committee to carry out the laudable aim of avoiding 'a clash of sectional or geographic interests'. The risk of such clashes cannot be avoided simply by denying local representation, and in any case, the clashes revealed in the Christchurch Conference were sectional rather than geographic. It was necessary to decide whether the proposed Council and committees should be appointed irrespective of interests, or elected by the agencies concerned. While on the whole

the Senate Committee favoured the former principle, it attempted to make the best of both worlds by suggesting an exception in favour of the WEA. 'The Committee is of opinion . . . that the unique position hitherto occupied by the WEA justifies the granting of separate representation to that body.' No one could deny the immense service to adult education that the WEA had performed, but it was scarcely consistent to include even such an established body in this unique position, and at the same time hope to adopt a principle of neutrality in respect to other national or even local agencies. The final effect of this recommendation has been that the district councils of the WEA have been better informed of the intentions of the Council than have either the local committees, the college councils, or the tutorial classes committees.

The inconsistency of principle implied here was carried over into the constitution of the local committees, though it might be argued that there was less to be said against it at the lower level. Apart from three representatives of the WEA specified in the report, the remaining members of each local committee were to be appointed by the college council. In explanation the Senate Committee stated:

It was felt that at least at the outset of the scheme it was not practicable to constitute the committees on a representative basis and that a system of co-optation might lead to the exclusion of new organizations because of the fear that they might make inroads on the funds allocated to existing organizations. The Committee also felt that some degree of supervision by college councils would assist in maintaining the standard of work done. A further reason which influenced the Committee was that in many cases Government grants would no doubt continue as in the past to be administered through the college councils. This would avoid some duplication of secretarial staff and would facilitate audit. The Committee does not regard the proposed method of determining the constitution of local committees as necessarily final. It can always be modified in the light of experience.

In view of the failure of the Christchurch Conference to reach agreement and the conflicts which that Conference revealed, it would perhaps be carping to complain that the Senate Committee's 'permanent machinery' was, after all, a makeshift. At the same time, it must have been fairly clear to members of the Committee that their recommendations would form the basis of legislation, and that 'a comprehensive scheme for adult education' should have been more than a makeshift. Two things the report did: it relieved the Minister of the responsibility of deciding among rival claims for assistance, and it preserved the position of the University and the WEA in the scheme of administration of adult education. At the same time, failure to develop fully the idea of departments of adult education within the colleges (as it had been developed in the *Final Report* from which the Committee quoted⁴), or, alternatively, to advocate the setting up of some other body to provide for needs not already met, was perhaps the most unfortunate feature of its findings. In effect the university colleges were to have a large measure of control of adult education without necessarily being responsible for building up an adequate organization to develop it.

The report was adopted by the Senate in 1937 without amendment, and was considered by the Minister. In May of the following year the Council of Adult Education was called together—some four months before it had legal existence. Indeed, at its second meeting it had the privilege, given to few bodies, of discussing the draft of the Act that brought it into being.

The *Education Amendment Act* 1938, clauses 7-11, dealt with the setting up of the Council of Adult Education.⁵ The membership of the Council was extended to seven (instead of five) by the inclusion of the Director of Education, and an additional member appointed by the Minister.

⁴ *Final Report*, 98.

⁵ The full text of the relevant clauses of the Act will be found in Appendix IV.

After giving the Council power to set up advisory committees, the Act proceeded to set out the duties of the Council: to co-ordinate the activities of organizations concerned with adult education and generally to promote adult education; to make recommendations to the Minister as to the annual grant to be made to the University for adult education; to control the expenditure of all funds granted to the University for adult education; and to report annually to the Minister. Adult education grants made to the University were to be expended only in accordance with the directions of the Council, and the Council was given specific powers to direct the University (a) 'to expend any such moneys for any specified purpose in relation to adult education' including reimbursement of the University in respect of administrative expenses, and (b) to make payments 'to any specified body of persons, whether incorporated or not, either generally or for any specified purpose in relation to adult education'. The Council was also given power to impose conditions in order to ensure that funds were expended only in accordance with its directions and to the best advantage.

Thus the Act (whether by design or accident is uncertain) at once went further than the Senate Committee had recommended, and yet not so far. The University became the main recipient of grants for adult education, but its functions in this respect were little more than those of an agent of the Council of Adult Education. It was, in short, simply a convenient body to hold the Council's bank account. For the Council was under no obligation to report to the Senate, but could instead issue directions to the University concerning the expenditure of grants. The Act made no mention of the local committees which the report had recommended, nor of the university colleges, though the colleges were the employing bodies of most of the adult tutors. In the sense that it had been given no staff the

Council was apparently thought of as a co-ordinating and not an executive body; but by that very omission it was implicitly prevented from carrying out effectively its co-ordinating functions. In practice, the only semblance of a permanent officer possessed by the Council has been the Registrar of the University, who was appointed Secretary, though to what extent he came under the direction of the Council is not clear.⁶

No provision was made in the Act for any local machinery such as the Senate Committee had recommended. This omission was partially rectified by resolution of the Council at its third meeting, when it recommended that an advisory committee should be set up in each university college district, to include three representatives of the college council, three representatives of the district council of the WEA, and such other representatives as the college council might appoint.⁷ By a queer anomaly these local advisory committees have been technically advisory to the Council of Adult Education, but act in relation to the local university colleges. They have no representation on the Council for Adult Education, and are informed only of those Council decisions that affect their respective territories. The functioning of the new Council will be dealt with in detail in a later chapter. Here it is sufficient to remark that, for the first time in the history of adult education in New Zealand, there was set up a body whose duty it was to survey the whole field and to ensure co-ordination.

⁶ One wonders how the Council would have functioned if the Vice-Chancellor of the University, who happens to reside in Wellington, had not been appointed as a Senate representative.

⁷ It appears that these local advisory committees were set up under Clause 9 of the Act, in which case they would be advisory to the Council of Adult Education. It may, however, be argued that the Council regarded the setting up of such committees by the college councils as a condition which it imposed 'for the purpose of ensuring that the moneys are expended only for the purposes specified and to the best advantage.' [Clause 11 (3)]. Unless either of these two contentions holds, it would appear that any individual college council could dispense with (or alter the constitution of) its advisory committee without reference to the Council of Adult Education.

THE COUNTRY LIBRARY SERVICE

No system of adult education, however widespread or tidily organized, can function adequately in a modern community without ample facilities for the distribution of books. Indeed, one measure of the effectiveness of adult education is the extent to which an intelligent use is made of the written word. When one has gathered all the statistics of people attending classes and lectures, and of all those who study discussion course notes, one has left out of the picture that larger and no less important number whose education is continued through personal reading. The mistake is often made of discounting the importance of the individual reader whose horizon is broadened by contact with a good library, and whose appreciation of literature is based on personal discovery. In one sense, however, many lectures and classes are but means to the development of private investigation through the critical appraisal of the written word. There is admittedly a stimulus to be derived from group discussion, but there is a difference between the unanimity of the ignorant and the conclusions of the informed. Lectures and classes may inspire the critical student to further study; discussions may force him to re-examine the basis of his established beliefs. But for the person who has never learned the methods of individual study, lectures and classes may be narcotic drugs, discussion but the excuse for another gallop on the seasoned hobby-horse.

The development of libraries, and the encouragement of their intelligent use, is, then, a necessary part of any comprehensive plan of adult education. While anything like a thorough investigation of library facilities must lie outside the present study, the new attitude towards them that was evident in the years following the depression must, because of its potential significance, receive brief, if inadequate, mention.

In a previous chapter reference was made to the large number of libraries that came into existence in the earliest days of New Zealand settlement.⁸ There is good reason to believe that the quality of reading matter provided for the library subscriber suffered a decline as the nineteenth century advanced. Anyone familiar with the book stocks of many of the minor libraries even ten years ago must have been aware of the decline in quality and of the waste that had taken place through thoughtless buying. For, despite the various Acts relating to libraries—copies of English legislation, for the most part—that had been placed on the statute book from 1869 onwards⁹, there had been no co-ordinated system of library service. The unintended effect of Government assistance on the libraries that originally formed part of the mechanics' institutes has already been noted. The assistance became a prop on which the institutes leaned, and its sudden removal hastened their collapse. A similar fate all but overtook minor libraries when subsidies were withdrawn and local body contributions reduced in the years following 1930. 'The subsidy was the main source of book supply to small libraries, and its withdrawal has meant the extinction of many of them.'¹⁰

The provision of finance from public funds for the support of libraries had taken different forms. In some instances, before the establishment of the present form of government in 1876, the Provincial Governments had bought books in accordance with approved lists submitted by local library committees. At a later period cash subsidies appear to have become the rule. This policy, coupled with

⁸ The Library Census of 1938 shows that, of the 401 'public' libraries listed, no fewer than 95 had been founded before 1880. The following table shows the number having their origin in each decade. These, it should be emphasized, refer only to *surviving public* libraries, and not to the many 'private' libraries or to public libraries that had met shipwreck:

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|------------|
| Decade | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 00 | 10 | 20 | 30 | not stated |
| No. of libraries | 3 | 8 | 22 | 62 | 56 | 37 | 62 | 44 | 54 | 19 | 34 |

⁹ The main Acts are *Libraries Acts* 1869, 1875, 1877, 1908, the *Municipal Corporations Act*, 1908 and 1920, and the *Counties Act*, 1920.

¹⁰ Munn and Barr, *New Zealand Libraries*, 64.

the subscription principle, had meant a good deal of useless duplication, and the search for subscribers had meant that much of what was bought was of ephemeral interest. When, then, the question of the revival of the library subsidies was considered towards the end of the depression, an important matter of principle was opened up.

Fortunately, there was available at the time a valuable report on *New Zealand Libraries*, the work of Ralph Munn, Director of the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, and John Barr, Chief Librarian of the Auckland Libraries. Their survey had been made in 1934 with Carnegie funds granted at the request of the New Zealand Library Association. Among the many far-sighted recommendations of this report, those concerned with methods of assisting and co-ordinating the smaller libraries are the most important for the present discussion. The report stated:

Instead of giving small sums to individual libraries, the whole amount should be allocated to a sub-department of the General Assembly Library, for the purchase of books. Each library qualified to receive the subsidy would then obtain a supply of well-chosen books bought more cheaply than an individual library could buy them for itself. In addition to this a system of exchanging books should be inaugurated, which would result in the stocks of the country libraries being refreshed three or four times a year instead of becoming a dead weight after they had been read.

An outline sketch was given of a co-ordinated system stretching from remote rural areas, through regions, to a national library, with extensions of library service through the interloan of books.

The Munn-Barr Report had been fully discussed by the Library Association and had attracted attention in other quarters, so that by 1935 there was a considerable body of opinion to support a change in library policy, particularly that governing rural libraries. Even before the change of Government in that year, a new scheme had been discussed,

and a proposal had been made for the experimental development of the Munn-Barr scheme in the Taranaki district.

When the Labour Government came into power, part of its declared policy was the equalizing of educational opportunity in town and country. The Country Library Service, officially inaugurated in May 1938, must rank as one of the most important advances in adult education in the history of the Dominion. The new service was established under the direct control of the Minister of Education, and was placed in charge of G. T. Alley, who during the previous eight years had acquired invaluable first-hand experience of country library problems in the Canterbury district, first with the CAR scheme, and later in the ACE organization.¹¹

The policy adopted by the Country Library Service was not one of providing a complete library service from a central source; it was rather one of decentralization through assisting and supplementing local effort and fostering the provision in the local community of the organization that made possible assistance from a central depot. Nevertheless, even in the seven years during which it has operated it has had considerable effect on local library policy. The ultimate aim is to develop the service on a regional basis by combining urban areas with their adjacent rural areas.

The services offered fall into five main divisions:

(1) *Free Public Borough Libraries* ('A' service). To public libraries under the control of Borough Councils or Town Boards where the population does not exceed a specified figure, and which are situated not less than ten miles from the public library of any one of the four centres, the CLS supplies an initial loan stock of fifteen books for every hundred of population. This stock is changed at regular intervals. As a condition of this service the library must be free to residents and supported out of the rates. Certain requirements are also made concerning the standard of

¹¹ See Chapter VI. Alley had also carried out a detailed survey of library facilities and needs in Taranaki. Several portions of the CLS scheme had been tried out in practice in 1937 while Alley was engaged in work for the ACE.

equipment, the employment of a paid librarian, and the development of a junior and intermediate service. The advantages of this scheme are gradually being appreciated by local authorities, and the number of free libraries co-operating in this 'A' service has risen from 16 in the first year to 50 in 1944. Originally applying only to boroughs and towns with a population of less than 2,500, the service was made available to towns of 10,000 population from March 1940, while from October 1944 it has been further extended to include towns of up to 15,000 population.

(2) *Subscription Libraries* ('B' service). If membership is available to the whole of the community, subscription libraries in rural areas outside boroughs and town districts may receive initial loan stock at a charge of £3 per fifty books changed twice a year.¹² Nearly 400 such libraries are at present serviced from the special CLS vans.

(3) *Groups of Readers* ('C' service). Groups in isolated or remote parts of the country, where no library is possible, receive an initial stock of about fifty books. At intervals of two months half the existing stock is changed by forwarding a supply of twenty-five books. The group is then required to forward at its own expense to another specified group the volumes it decides to change. By this means it is possible to keep to a roster of groups in a manner similar to that used in the box scheme conducted by the WEA. Over seventy groups are assisted in this way.

(4) *Individuals* ('D' service). In any country district covered by the 'A', 'B', or 'C' services, individuals who wish to obtain books or information on a particular subject receive assistance (within certain limits) from the headquarters of the CLS, either through their local library or, if that is impossible, by means of a direct postal service. The only cost to the reader is the return postage at a special library rate. This enables the serious student to have at his disposal the

¹² The original rate was £4 per fifty books changed three times a year. Owing to the necessity of economy in petrol and tyres, the service now operates twice a year.

resources of a library far better than that which a small community could hope to support. There has been a steady increase in requests under this service, which in 1944 reached more than 450 individuals. All lighthouses under the control of the Marine Department now receive regular consignments of books.

(5) *Exchange of 'read out' stock* ('E' service). When the CLS van calls at a country library, it carries, in addition to the regular stock, a collection of readable books that are no longer in demand in other libraries. The library visited may exchange for these books volumes of a similar nature in its own stock. This service is of considerable value to small libraries that have been in existence for some time.¹⁸

Two specially designed vans are operated by the CLS (one in each island), each carrying upwards of eleven hundred volumes, shelved, catalogued, and on display. In the more progressive areas the arrival of the van is an event of some importance, and the service is warmly appreciated; one county council member remarked, 'It has made all the difference in the world to this community.'

It has been the policy of the CLS to encourage a high standard of reading, and for that reason a proportion of non-fiction (50 per cent for free libraries, and 40 per cent for smaller libraries) must be included in every bulk selection. An attempt is also made to persuade the individual reader to include some non-fiction among the books he chooses. A considerable amount of tactful argument has been necessary to have this stipulation willingly accepted in some areas. The local selection committee tends to find its way more or less successfully round the side of the van reserved for fiction, but has been known to appeal to the travelling librarian with the plaintive request, 'Now suppose you choose the hard books!' A good deal of tact has to be exercised. The CLS must not encourage the false and not

¹⁸ Statistics of the CLS are given in *A. to J. H.-32A*.

uncommon notion that the non-fiction is propaganda that the Government wants to 'put over' on the people. At the same time the librarian cannot allow one group to choose all its non-fiction from the one classification, say, 'travel' or 'biography', lest he should find himself left towards the end of the tour with a disproportionate amount of 'religion and philosophy'. In other ways, too, he has calls on his diplomacy; he may know that certain sections should be read more widely ('child psychology' is an example), and yet any suggestion of dictation would destroy the goodwill which the librarians have built up during the past seven years. There is no doubt that there is room for training among librarians in smaller areas, and the honorary librarians of subscription libraries would benefit by a brief course in the elementary principles of modern library practice. The difference between coaxing and dictation is hard to define, but there it is obvious that the existence in each community of someone with a considerable knowledge of books would enhance the value of the service. At present this is not, of course, the business of the CLS, though every call for advice is answered, and a lot has already been done indirectly to improve the position.

The non-fiction stocks carried by the CLS are excellent. The selection of fiction, naturally, presents difficulties that would scarcely occur in buying for a large city library that carried a 'pay collection', and any mistakes are likely to be magnified in effect when considered in relation to the thirty or sixty volumes left by the van at any one time. Tastes in some rural areas are a little more prudish than in most urban communities, and people accustomed to the reserve of the Victorian novel are apt to take offence at modern realism.

It is not possible to mention all the services provided by the CLS. The war has put a brake on some developments through shortage of stock and the demands for libraries in

military camps and on troopships. Despite this, facilities are being steadily extended, and in 1944 the CLS had a stock of about 160,000 volumes. The Carnegie Corporation made possible the appointment of a liaison officer working between the CLS and the New Zealand Library Association. The appointee to this post was an English-trained librarian of very wide experience, whose reports on library work have been most valuable.¹⁴ Experiments have been made in providing material from which lectures for Women's Institutes and Divisions could be worked up, and notes on various topics have been prepared. Basic stock lists have been prepared in certain sections.¹⁵ The CLS has taken a prominent part in the scheme to provide a union catalogue of all non-fiction holdings of New Zealand libraries and in the development of an interloan system.¹⁶ Recently book depots have been established for certain purposes outside of Wellington. Because of its wide ramifications, the CLS has already exerted an important influence, particularly on the smaller libraries, which now have a source of advice on which they can draw. There is evidence that the standard of librarianship is improving, and that local bodies are becoming increasingly appreciative of the service. There can, in short, be little doubt that the CLS, in the brief time that it has been in operation, has become a powerful force making for the improvement of the quality of life in rural communities, and has done much to aid the establishment of good libraries, which, in the words of the first report of the Director, 'is an elementary step in the process of giving significance to the high proportion of literacy in this country'.

¹⁴ See 'N.Z. Libraries in 1940', circulated by the Association.

¹⁵ A service to some 650 schools is also provided, but this falls outside the scope of the present study. The Canterbury Tutorial Classes Committee for some years made use of the CLS to provide books in Public Works Department camps.

¹⁶ It is not generally known that a subscriber at any large library can obtain through the interloan almost any non-fiction work that is available in the Dominion.

PHYSICAL WELFARE AND RECREATION

To the two pieces of comprehensive machinery already considered there was added a third, not as part of a fully co-ordinated plan, but as a separate venture, scarcely connected in the minds of most people with the field of adult education.¹⁷ It is, however, of considerable importance. Under the *Physical Welfare and Recreation Act 1937* there was set up, under the chairmanship of the Minister of Internal Affairs, a National Council of Physical Welfare and Recreation to advise the Government on matters relating to 'the maintenance and improvement of the physical well-being of the people by means of physical training, exercise, sport, and recreation, and the social activities relating thereto, and from time to time to make such investigations as it deems necessary, or as the Minister directs it to make for that purpose'. The Act empowered the Minister to set up in each declared district a district committee, and to make grants out of allocated funds to assist local authorities and voluntary organizations in providing, or in aiding the provision of facilities for physical and recreational activities, including 'the provision and equipment of gymnasiums, playing-fields, swimming-baths, bathing-places, holiday camps, and camping-sites, and other buildings, premises, and places for physical training, exercise, sport, and recreation, or as centres for the use of clubs, societies, or organizations including in their objects the physical well-being and recreation of the people and social activities related thereto'. Power was given to local authorities to expend funds for any of the purposes of the Act. Money might also be used for the provision and training of suitable leaders and instructors.

The Act, which bore some resemblance to an Act passed

¹⁷ In point of time the *Physical Welfare and Recreation Act* preceded the setting up of the other two agencies. The PWR Council was called together at almost the same time as the inauguration of the CLS and the Council of Adult Education.

by the British Parliament in the same year¹⁸, was mainly directed at the development of a positive attitude towards health. In introducing the second reading of the bill in the House of Representatives, the Minister of Internal Affairs, who was largely responsible for the measure, emphasized, it is true, the relation between mental and physical health; but, for the most part, it was the sections dealing with recreational and physical development that received attention. One of the first tasks undertaken by the newly created branch of the Department of Internal Affairs was the planning of a national survey of recreational facilities already existing. Some local authorities produced valuable and comprehensive reports; the Dominion was divided into some 27 districts; organizers were appointed in some areas; and, by the end of 1939, 176 district committees had been set up.

The administration of the Act, however, soon showed that much more than the encouragement of physical recreation could be undertaken under its authority. In a circular¹⁹ issued to district committees early in 1939, the Department suggested that the district committees proceed on the following lines:

- (1) To arouse particularly in country areas public feeling to the need for community centres containing adequate club rooms.
- (2) To organize a federation of sports bodies within the committee's district.
- (3) To promote such cultural activities in the community as dramatic clubs, choral societies, music clubs, bands, orchestras, debating, and public speaking.
- (4) To encourage physical activity clubs and classes such as recreational physical training classes, gymnastics, athletics, active games for indoor and outdoor. [*sic*]
- (5) To foster social recreative games.
- (6) To arrange 'group travel' schemes.²⁰

The idea of community centres was expounded at some length, and the circular supplied a list of cultural activities

¹⁸ *Physical Training and Recreation Act* 1937.

¹⁹ 'A Lead to District Committees for Future Activities', April 1939.

²⁰ These were schemes for providing holidays at reduced rates.

that had been organized in such institutions in other countries.

Lack of finance was from the beginning a difficulty in the way of development of the district committees, and the outbreak of war after the plan had been in operation for barely two years delayed any large-scale development. Some of the staff employed under the scheme were assigned to welfare work with the armed forces, and the general upset of most civilian activities diverted attention from the purposes of the Act. A few attempts have been made to establish community centres, though the Government appears to have offered little by way of example in the housing schemes that have so far been developed. As minor achievements 'councils of sport' have been set up, and some effort has been made to keep school-leavers in touch with sports clubs in their neighbourhood.

The scheme contemplated in the Act, however, does not appear to have been drawn up after any careful consideration of the relations between recreation and education, or of the functions of community centres. It is, indeed, unfortunate that the scheme was launched under a branch of the Department of Internal Affairs and not under the Education Department. So long as close co-ordination of recreational and educational functions is absent, there are two dangers that have to be kept in mind: if the emphasis is placed mainly on physical welfare, cultural activities (unfortunate phrase!) may tend to be regarded as make-weights thrown in to give added attraction to the scheme; if, on the other hand, the emphasis is placed on cultural activities, there may readily develop under the Department of Internal Affairs an organization which, so far from providing a valuable community service, will make confusion more confused. The setting of good initial standards in the provision of recreational facilities is of prime importance; but one feels that standards are very likely to suffer unless recreation and adult education are so co-ordinated as to form part of a

comprehensive scheme. It is admittedly necessary to approach the community with something comprehensible and attractive: 'Let your people dance, but let them have a chance to do it well; let your people sing, and sing modern stuff too, but see to it that what they sing and dance is not second-rate, and if you are forced to put up with the second-rate, never, never pretend that it is anything else'.²¹ Further, the adolescent in particular should not be encouraged to think of sport as the only creative use of leisure. It is high time that we as a people realized that adolescents have many needs, and are not simply people to be kept at physical jerks to prevent them from getting into mischief. If we fail to realize this, we may end by perpetuating what many hope to avoid—the fixated adolescent, the gullible raw material for the first propagandist with a new political nostrum. This does not mean that the work of the Physical Welfare and Recreation Branch should have a puritanical flavour of uplift; it does mean that in any scheme for adult or adolescent education, physical recreation should not be allowed to assume an exaggerated importance. Rather by the promotion of what for want of a better phrase must be called cultural activities (among which physical activities and sport take a reasonable place) something like balance may be achieved. To this end it will be necessary to link the work of the PWR Branch with that of other departments of the Government, and with voluntary agencies of adult education. In the view of the present writer, the whole scheme should be regarded as a function of the Education Department, but conducted under the supervision of a special council as at present. The return to peace-time conditions may offer a convenient opportunity for the proposed change.

The work of the Council of Physical Welfare and Recreation has suffered from lack of any adequate explanation of its aims to the general public. A great many people scarcely know of its existence; some appear to believe

²¹ Brew, J. Macalister. *In the Service of Youth*. London 1943.

(quite wrongly, and despite the great care shown by the Minister to avoid the misconception) that it aims at the regimentation of all forms of sports activity; a few of the churches and other voluntary agencies—sometimes, one feels, belatedly becoming aware of a duty only half-fulfilled—have come to fear that the scheme will result in the complete and compulsory absorption of their youth. A little more publicity of the right kind would probably remove these doubts.

THE GENERAL OUTLOOK

The three important measures that have been described—the setting up of the Council of Adult Education, the inauguration of the Country Library Service, and the development of the Physical Welfare and Recreation Branch of the Department of Internal Affairs—occurring as they did within a few years of the dreary events recorded in the previous chapter, opened up new prospects in adult education. To those in the field it seemed that the resources required for development would at last become available; and, in fact, restoration and increase of Government grants enabled existing agencies immediately to recover some of the lost ground.

This was not all. The national broadcasting stations, placed under direct Government control in 1936, came under the directorship of Professor James Shelley, whose interest in adult education has been mentioned more than once in preceding pages. There appeared some prospect that the new medium would become a real force in education. In 1938, too, the Education Department sponsored at Feilding, a North Island country town of some 5,000 inhabitants, an experimental community centre, and H. C. D. Somerset, who with his wife had already done valuable pioneering work in the south, was placed in charge of it. Recently returned from a trip overseas, Somerset was aware of developments in England and other countries, and had in

addition an intimate knowledge of New Zealand life that had established his reputation as one of the few rural sociologists that the Dominion had produced.²² Allied as it was with an agricultural high school noted for its experimental approach to education, and assured of adequate financial support, the Feilding Community Centre seemed to have good prospects of success.

The general feeling of optimism was increased by the comparatively rapid recovery of the finances of the country. Conditions of labour improved, wages were raised, and the extensive Public Works programme of the Government provided work for many whose morale had been seriously undermined during the depression years. Funds were made available for educational work in Public Works camps and, despite difficulties, travelling tutors were able to organize some very live study and discussion groups. Country work, which had been hampered by lack of staff, could now be developed more adequately, and made rapid progress.

It was in an atmosphere such as this that the WEA celebrated its twenty-first birthday. To those who had struggled to keep the movement alive during the depression the event had a symbolic significance: it seemed that at last adult education was coming of age.

WAR

Then came the war. At first it was not possible to gauge its full effect on the adult education movement. Initial excitement gave place to a long period during which little seemed to happen. There followed the dramatic series of reverses in Europe, when the war became a sterner reality. The entry of Japan finally brought home the full significance of the struggle to people in New Zealand. The tremendous strain on manpower brought about by the

²² Somerset's *Littledene*, based on an intensive study of a South Island town, has become a standard work.

demands of industry, the armed forces, the Home Guard, and the Emergency Precautions Service, seriously affected adult education.²³ Large numbers of people found their leisure completely consumed in activities related to the war effort; and many of those not so directly affected were kept at home because of the black-out and petrol restrictions.

In an unexpected way, however, the various defence services demonstrated the possibilities of adult learning. Men and women who had for many years not attempted to study anything that was not connected with their daily occupation began to find that they could acquire new skills and information. Home Guard tactics and EPS training may seem very different from the normal curriculum of adult education; but the efficiency reached by many people on the far side of middle age was as surprising to them as to their instructors. It was not unusual to find people who spent two nights a week and part of each week-end mastering facts and practices that had no part in their previous experience. Others set about re-learning things they had long forgotten. Still others, forced to study their own communities, learned in a few weeks more of human nature and practical sociology than they could have acquired in years of lecture-going, and at the same time developed a new sense of social responsibility. The success achieved by some was remarkable. A grocer scored better than university graduates in an examination on poison gas; a small shopkeeper, who had probably never tried to teach anyone before, became an extremely able officer in the EPS, training his men and boys with a wealth of home-made teaching aids that would have been a credit to a seasoned professional. Such revelations of the ordinary citizen's ability to learn were matched by the facility in mastering pre-entry courses shown by Air Force trainees whose school records had certified them as 'poor in

²³ The Prime Minister is reported (1944) as having stated that approximately one man in three of military age in New Zealand, regardless of his family obligations or occupation, had seen service overseas. (*Auckland Star*, 6 May 1944.)

mathematics'. Anyone who laments the falling-off in the number of students enrolled in adult education classes should not lose sight of these and other achievements.

For temporarily enrolments did fall off. By 1938 WEA groups and classes, for example, had recovered more than half of the ground lost in the depression; by 1942 their enrolments had been set back to the depression level.²⁴ Then, as the danger of invasion disappeared, enrolments became in some districts embarrassingly large. In the sixth year of war the demand for adult education appears greater than ever before in the history of this country—a situation that will be surprising only to those who forget that the WEA was established in the shadow of a previous conflict.

RETROSPECT

At this point in the survey, when chronological treatment is no longer possible, it may be profitable to summarize briefly the ground that has been traversed. Adult education is as old as organized settlement. It came to New Zealand with the pioneers, and first took the form of the mechanics' institutes which for some thirty years lived a vigorous if uncertain life. The institutes—transplanted to this country when they had begun to lose their original character in England—catered not so much for one section of the population, but for the community as a whole. They served rather as foci of the cultural life of the community than as institutions for continued and serious study. Eventually they either developed into libraries and became merged in municipal undertakings, or died out with population changes and the withdrawal of public support. Thereafter, the work of adult education was taken up by numerous agencies, of which the church was probably the most important. Towards the end of the century there was an unsuccessful attempt to establish university extension work on English

²⁴ See Fig. I, p. 89.

lines. About the same time there began the development of technical education. Despite a few sporadic attempts at 'workers' education' in the early years of the present century, it was not until the beginning of World War I that the adult education movement made its appearance with the establishment of the WEA. This movement was itself a branch of the same broad stream from which the mechanics' institutes had come. Introduced with missionary zeal, the WEA weathered the difficult war years, and by 1919 had obtained recognition from the State. Its rapid expansion during the twenties was the result of a wealth of experiment that produced numerous attempts to adapt the principles of the WEA to the peculiar social and geographical conditions of New Zealand. By 1930 it had become the most important, though not the sole, agency of adult education, spreading limited resources over the whole country, undertaking work that lay outside the original conception of its founders, and attracting to its classes and groups people from many walks of life. The depression years checked this expansion; but they produced also the important experiments sponsored by the Carnegie Corporation that have affected the later history of the movement. After the trying period from 1930 to 1935 new prospects were opened up by the establishment of the three important organizations that have been considered in the present chapter. There followed a brief period of recovery, interrupted temporarily by the outbreak of war in 1939.

That very briefly is the history of adult education. But in thus summarizing a century of social endeavour one must not conclude that the agencies that apparently show out in such sharp relief are the only ones operating in the field. The picture is much less simple than that. The life of a community is not to be comprehended in a series of simple episodes; and adult education, an inherent function of community, is not a simple succession of agencies following

one another like the kings of England. Some attempt at a cross-section of the community as it sets about the task of educating adults is undertaken in the two following chapters.

PART TWO

ADULT EDUCATION AT THE PRESENT DAY

'Cardinal Newman would have been horrified at this extension of the term "education". In his view, "recreations are not education, accomplishments are not education. Do not say, the people must be educated, when, after all, you only mean amused, refreshed, soothed, put into good spirits and good humour, or kept from vicious excesses". But it is my contention that Newman was mistaken.'

F. A. CAVENAGH, 'Adult Education Past and Future',
Adult Education, December 1938.

CHAPTER VIII

Cross Section: Major Agencies

* ————— *

THE term 'adult education' means different things in different countries: in New Zealand, linked for more than a century with English tradition, the term has usually been applied to the system of non-vocational classes, study groups, and short courses of lectures conducted for the most part by voluntary organizations receiving grants from the State. As in England, the work has been loosely linked with the university. Any one attempting to give a cross-section picture of adult education must, therefore, bear in mind certain peculiar features of university organization and practice in this country.

THE UNIVERSITY AND THE UNIVERSITY COLLEGES

The teaching work of the University of New Zealand is conducted by the four university colleges more or less evenly spaced along the length of the country, and by the School of Agriculture, which consists of two teaching colleges, one in each island. Entrance to the university colleges is gained by a comparatively high proportion of the population. Though all except one of the colleges have residential hostels, residence in a university centre is not in general required by university regulations, and is in practice necessary only

for students enrolled in those courses where supervised laboratory or practical work is an integral part of the teaching technique. Until 1944 the normal method of matriculation was conditional upon the passing of an entrance examination; but while this method of entry remains, there is now a second method—the accrediting of pupils from approved schools. A third door to the university has been open for some time: the granting of ‘provisional matriculation’ to approved persons over the age of twenty-one years. Students admitted in any one of these three ways may proceed to a degree after satisfying the university requirements in other respects. But the university goes further; in effect it allows any serious student to attend lectures upon payment of the very moderate fees, though he cannot, of course, present himself for examination except for a ‘certificate of proficiency’. Such a person is, in fact, in a more favourable position than an ‘extra-mural’ student who, though permitted to place his name on the books of the college and to present himself for examination, receives no organized assistance from the teaching body. For, although the colleges enrol a large number of such external students, they make little provision for the instruction of these folk, who are dependent on their own resources or on assistance from private correspondence coaching colleges. For historical reasons the university has thrown its net still wider. The arrangement of hours in many departments of the colleges makes part-time attendance possible for a very large number of students who are engaged in earning a living during the day. It follows that—particularly in faculties like Arts, Commerce, and Law—university study of some kind (or should one say degree-getting?) is a possibility for a much larger proportion of the population than in most other countries, and the colleges have occasionally incurred the criticism of being ‘glorified night schools’. Into the justice of this sweeping criticism, which ignores the considerable number of fine scholars that the university has produced, it

is no part of the present study to inquire. What must be noted is that the university colleges, even in their normal courses, enter upon what in some other countries would be considered the field of general adult education.

It is highly probable that some students who, in other circumstances, might be found in such strenuous forms of adult education as advanced or three-year tutorial classes, are in this country attending the normal lectures of the colleges. At risk of doing injustice to certain efforts that have been made in the past, one may say, in brief, that the university, instead of developing any comprehensive scheme of university extension, on the English model, has embarked rather on a policy of enrolling students in its ordinary courses. From time to time one or another of the colleges has ventured on a scheme of extension work, the most recent being experiments conducted by Victoria and Auckland University Colleges, which for a few years offered lectures in provincial centres.¹ But, despite such efforts, it may be said that extension work, in the stricter sense of that term, does not exist. For this the main reasons have been the inadequate staffing of the colleges and the lack of funds. The colleges are poorly endowed and, being dependent almost entirely on State grants, have been hard put to it to provide for the normal expansion of their intra-mural teaching work. In the past the expansion of the Workers' Educational Association, too, has meant that any attempt on the part of the university to launch a separate scheme for extension work would have resulted in a duplication of services, for which opportunity and resources would have been lacking. For difficulties of finance have been such that any proposal to expend money on extension work has necessarily had to be considered in relation to the many needs of the ordinary teaching departments of the colleges.

¹ The Auckland Scheme operated from 1937. Victoria College was providing similar facilities in 1941. An Extension Council was set up in Canterbury in 1901, but found no response to its offer of lectures. Six years later a scheme was mooted in the Wanganui area. The work of the Home Science Extension Department of Otago University has been described in Chapters V and VI.

Nevertheless the university has played an important part in adult education in a number of ways. The college council in each district is technically the employing body of the full-time tutors engaged in work organized by a number of bodies, of which the most important are the WEA, the ACE, and the Sarah Anne Rhodes Fellowship.² Each of the four colleges has an employee variously styled 'Director of Adult Education', 'Director of Tutorial Classes', or 'Director of Extension Work'. In only one centre is this person an officer of the college with no other duties; in the remaining colleges he undertakes the supervision of adult education as an addition to his teaching work within the college. In 1944 the colleges had a total of fourteen full-time tutors. The colleges also employ the part-time tutors, frequently members of their teaching staffs, who are engaged in conducting classes for the WEA.

The University and the colleges also enter the field of adult education through the important part which they play in organization. The University has two representatives on the Council of Adult Education; the colleges appoint the local advisory committees of adult education, to which falls the duty of co-ordinating the work of various agencies at the district level, and appoint half the members of the tutorial classes committees set up to supervise the teaching work of the WEA.

THE COUNCIL OF ADULT EDUCATION AND THE LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEES

The machinery through which the Government grants for adult education are distributed was set up in 1938, and has been briefly described in a previous chapter. To understand its importance it is necessary to remember that there is in New Zealand no system of comprehensive local educational authorities having oversight of all levels of

² See Chapter VI.

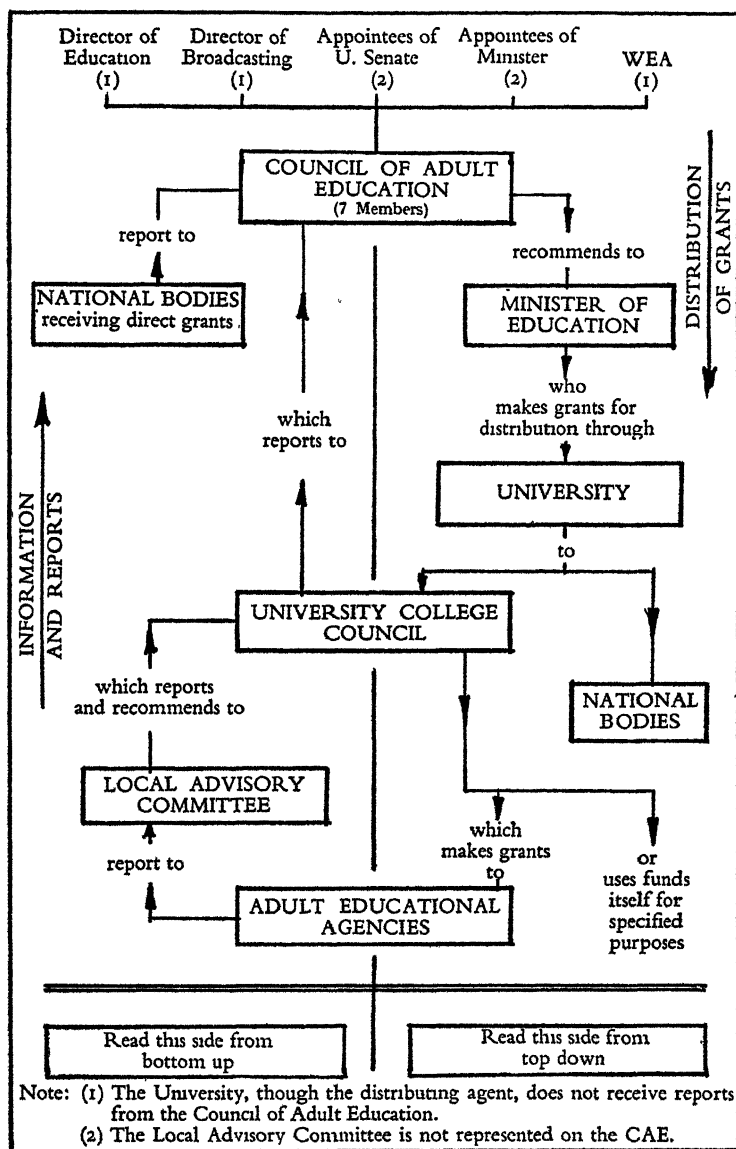


Fig. VI Present Machinery for Co-ordination of Adult Education

education. The working of the machinery is best explained with the help of Fig. VI.

Consider first the right-hand side of the diagram. At the top is the Council of Adult Education which, after considering various requests for assistance and budgeting for the needs of the whole of New Zealand, makes its recommendations to the Minister. The Minister, after considering the suggestions of the Council, makes available through the University the funds to carry out approved projects. The University automatically distributes to each college council the money allocated for projects in the college area. (It is, in the wording of the Act, 'directed' so to do by the Council.) Some of these projects will be more or less directly under the control of the college; others will be conducted by other agencies, and will be financed out of the grant.

The channels through which information is obtained are set out on the left-hand side of the diagram. The local advisory committee in each college area receives periodical reports from the various district educational agencies that are in receipt of funds. Owing to a certain amount of overlapping of personnel, the committee is in fairly close touch with their work. Requests for assistance are considered by the committee, which then forwards to the college council a budget for approval; it also transmits recommendations on other matters. The committee has no funds of its own, cannot itself employ staff or make appointments, but makes representations on these matters to the college council. The council, after considering the committee's reports and recommendations, forwards them, if necessary, to the Council of Adult Education, and so the channel of communication is complete. It will be noted that there is no direct channel between the local advisory committee and the Council of Adult Education on either side, and that the flow of information is in one direction only.

At first glance the scheme seems simple enough. But a more detailed consideration of its working reveals certain

difficulties which, because they affect so much of formal adult education, must be set out in full. In the first place, even if some of the formalities are waived in practice, the scheme is clumsy, as a hypothetical example will demonstrate. Let us suppose that a request involving additional expenditure is made by the Auckland Tutorial Classes Committee. The secretary of that body (who happens to be Director of Tutorial Classes) informs the Registrar of the University College who, in turn, calls a meeting of the Local Advisory Committee (of which the Director of Tutorial Classes may be acting as secretary). Some of the members of the Tutorial Classes Committee, being in all probability also members of the Advisory Committee, will traverse all the ground again. If the request is approved, the recommendation is then sent on by the Advisory Committee to the College Council. Now, college councils are not elected for their knowledge of or interest in adult education, and, not necessarily having worked in the field, may find it difficult to understand the reasons for the request. It is, however, probable that some members of the Council will have sat through the discussion of the recommendation twice already and will, in consequence be able to enlighten their fellow members; but this is not necessarily the case. Human beings are forgetful creatures, and the complicated structure of the organization of adult education (and the meaning of the initials used to denote the various bodies) is not easily remembered. It may happen that the Chairman of the College Council, or some other member who understands these mysteries, will have to spend a few minutes in initiating new-comers or recapitulating for the benefit of others. If there are no complications, the recommendation is approved and forwarded to the Secretary of the Council of Adult Education (the Registrar of the University) in Wellington. But the CAE may not be aware of the local conditions which make the request reasonable and, since there is not necessarily any member of the CAE with the

local knowledge³, nor any officer whose business it would be to make inquiries, there is always the possibility that the point of the request may be misunderstood. This would involve either the opening of a whole new circuit of correspondence or the refusal of the request on mistaken though superficially adequate grounds. A two-minute explanation by someone who, knowing the local conditions, was present at the meeting of the Council, might have avoided the whole difficulty. The principle of representation which the Senate Committee conceded only to the WEA might, if applied with respect to the local advisory committees, produce a handsome dividend.

But even the case already examined does not bring out all the anomalies. At the level of the Senate of the University the position is not much better. As originally planned by the Senate Committee, the Council of Adult Education had as one of its functions that of making an annual report to the Senate. The Council as set up by the Act of 1938 is under no such obligation. The University puts through its books sums of money received from the CAE for distribution to the various colleges. Receiving no report from the Council to enlighten it, it has no overall picture of adult education, and no means of judging the quality of the work done. It is, as already remarked, merely the distributing agent of the CAE. It was certainly not the intention of the Senate Committee to place the University in this peculiar position.⁴

One of the main factors making for co-ordination should be the pooling of information, so as to keep local areas informed of what was happening elsewhere. (Those familiar with the working of the English Board of Education will appreciate this point.) Under the present organization, however, one local advisory committee may have no knowledge of what another is planning or doing, for the simple reason

³ At present only one member of the Council, the representative of the WEA, belongs to any district outside of Wellington.

⁴ See p. 146. The Senate at a meeting in January 1944 asked for an amendment to the Act of 1938 so as to provide for the submission of a report from the CAE.

that it is not represented on the CAE and receives from that body no report or bulletin that might enlighten it. In practice a good deal of information leaks out; but rumour is a lying jade. It is admittedly important that money should be spent where it is most needed and not for the sake of spending in one district as much as is spent in another, and the CAE must make decisions. But by failing to make known to all local advisory committees the decisions that it reaches, or (what is more important) the principles on which it arrives at these decisions, the CAE leaves room for the type of misunderstanding that it desires to prevent. For a rumour that, while one district is carefully weighing requests and deciding that such and such a claim must be refused, another is receiving a grant for the asking, introduces into the organization the very element of parochial rivalry that the whole set-up was designed to avoid. May it not be true in educational administration, as in law, that 'it is of fundamental importance that justice should not only be done, but should manifestly and undoubtedly be seen to be done'.⁵

The policy pursued by the Council is in some respects open to criticism. In order to prevent waste through competing claims by the two important women's organizations—the Women's Institutes and the Women's Divisions—a committee was set up to co-ordinate their Dominion-wide educational work. For some reason the CAE has made direct grants (not through the colleges) of considerable sums to this co-ordinating committee. The present writer would be the last to deny the value of these bodies, but the effect of the direct grants has not always been happy. It has occasionally happened that work planned by the local area, with the use of earmarked funds, clashes with work planned by the Institutes and Divisions, thus producing what the Council was created to avoid—wasteful overlapping of limited resources. It would seem much better to have all grants made only to the university college districts, with the

⁵ *Id.* Stewart, L.C.J., in *Rex v. Sussex Justices* (1924), J.K.B. 256 at p. 259.

proviso that a certain portion of the sum should be used conjointly with a neighbouring area for specified purposes. Alternatively, the local area should be informed of the projects for which grants are made. The point is that the local advisory committee is quite likely to be unaware of what the national agency has recommended or been given the funds to carry out. The difficulty is aggravated by the fact that the representatives of national bodies to which direct grants may be made are doubtless selected for many admirable qualities among which, however, interest in and knowledge of problems of serious adult education would be accidental.

It must, of course, be admitted that certain services of the greatest significance in adult education would be better provided on a national basis than by the districts. An obvious case is the Country Library Service; though even here more effective liaison is required if real co-ordination is to be brought about, and the Director of the Service is not a member of the Council. What is contended is that great care is needed in deciding which services should be provided nationally, and that the local advisory committees should be kept informed of the plans of such services.⁶

An important question of finance is also bound up with the policy of the Council. During the depression, the wisdom of husbanding resources was amply proved. Undoubtedly the existence of the CAE makes for some degree of stability in more or less normal times. But the fate of the WEA during the depression is an object lesson not easily forgotten, and it would be unwise to assume that the Carnegie Corporation would again come to the rescue. It is true that the Council is working on much the same basis as the Education Department and other bodies dependent on annual grants, and that Government departments cannot build up large reserves out

⁶ The 'cultural' work of the Physical Welfare and Recreation Branch of the Department of Internal Affairs also needs co-ordination. The CLS is committed to a policy of co-operation with local government authorities and has already achieved a considerable degree of decentralization by this means. The need for liaison with agencies of adult education is, however, great.

of income. At the same time there is no provision at present for capital expenditure, which sooner or later is bound to be required. In at least one instance a local area has found its yearly allowance cut to the extent of certain accumulated funds which it had put aside for a special purpose. The matter was put right eventually; but the effect of such a threatened reduction is to cause a happy opportunism in expenditure that can have disastrous results. Some scheme of encouraging agencies to have reasonable amounts set aside from sources other than grants (for example, from students' fees or donations) might some time in the future enable adult education to weather a bad year or two. Perhaps this is crying for the moon; perhaps, too, the incident cited would not have occurred if the Council had been in a position to receive a first-hand explanation.

It will be remembered that the Senate Committee considered that 'co-ordination can be achieved only by a permanent body which keeps in constant touch with the work of the agencies concerned'.⁷ It is difficult to see how the CAE, as at present constituted, can perform this function. Three of its present members (men, it is admitted, with anything up to thirty years' experience of adult education) are extremely busy men: one is Vice-Chancellor of the University and Principal of a University College; one controls both the national and commercial divisions of the Broadcasting Service; the other is Director of Education. The Secretary is the Registrar of the University, who, it is to be supposed, has no great amount of spare time. There is no permanent staff to see that up-to-date information is always on hand, and the Council does not appear to be empowered to provide an administrative officer, if one were thought desirable. The Council meets at most two or three times a year, and can have little opportunity for leisurely discussion and the framing of far-sighted policy. If adult education is to develop, more than this will be required. In

⁷ See Chapter VII above.

theory the Council needs no staff, since it is not an executive body; but it is the view of many interested in adult education, and probably also of members of the Council itself, that it cannot adequately perform even its advisory functions at present, and that in fact it is not, and cannot hope to remain, purely advisory. The nature of the grants that it recommends will affect the whole course of adult education, and the Council cannot, by stressing its advisory functions, avoid this responsibility. It may be argued that, while the Council may not as a body be in touch with developments, it has the power to appoint advisory committees to assist it. It has; but its use of this machinery has not been impressive. One such sub-committee (on the use of radio), appointed five years ago, has not yet been called together. The suggestion that some more permanent link should be provided is not a plea for centralization; it is a plea for the machinery that will enable the CAE to perform adequately the three chief functions required of it in the Act: to co-ordinate, to promote, and to advise.

In practice, of course, the machinery outlined in previous paragraphs is simplified. The CAE is informed of the amount of money available from Government grants and apportions it among the four districts according to its evaluation of the budgets forwarded by the college councils. Through force of circumstances, the local advisory committees, so far from remaining purely advisory, have nearly all become 'providing agencies' in the sense that they frequently make decisions without reference to the college councils, and have tended to assume executive powers. For in recent years there has grown up a body of educational work, particularly in connection with women's groups in town and country, that cannot be conveniently undertaken by any other existing agency. Suburban classes, winter schools, discussion courses written especially for women's groups, to mention only a few examples, together make up a volume of work for which the services of both full-time

and part-time staff are required. Organization of such classes and groups lies outside of the scope and resources of the WEA, and can be adequately undertaken only by full-time tutors working under the general supervision of the advisory committee. (In point of fact, a great many of the country classes ascribed to the WEA are in practice organized in similar fashion.) Further, an additional reason for some separate control of such work will be at once obvious to any one with an intimate knowledge of adult education in New Zealand: to many sections of the public, particularly in country areas, the name 'WEA' is suspect, if not almost sufficient to keep people away from activities associated with it. This suspicion, which has been largely cultivated by the damaging and even fantastic reports concerning the WEA published by certain sections of the press,⁸ may be unjustified; but, here again, it is not what an organization really does, so much as what people think it does, that is of practical importance when one tries to enrol members of classes. Quite apart from this objection, too, the constitution of the WEA is not such as to give adequate representation of country areas, whereas the already existing women's organizations—Women's Divisions, Women's Institutes, Mothers' Unions and Leagues—can all be used, with judicious caution, for purposes of publicity and organization; but not under the banner of the WEA.

The tutorial classes committee of the WEA, being designed for a different purpose, is a most unsuitable body to handle the supervision of such work, while the district council of the WEA, composed as it is of people with entirely different interests, would be still less desirable, even supposing it had the necessary staff. The only alternative, then, to the local advisory committee, as an overseeing body, is at present the college council. Experience has shown that

⁸ A member of a local authority when discussing a proposal to make a grant to the WEA came out with the statement that classes opened with the singing of the *Red Flag*. This fatuous remark was reported in papers throughout New Zealand!

many council members have little appreciation of the detailed problems involved in conducting classes for busy housewives. A recent incident may give point to this objection. In one area it was found that, in order to attend classes, women had often to bring their young children with them. Arrangements were made to have babies and toddlers cared for by trained assistance. When, therefore, the local advisory committee was submitting plans for a community centre scheme, it included a 'crèche' as a desirable feature of the proposed centre. This was a sad mistake. It took a considerable portion of a meeting of a male college council, and a meeting of a sub-committee of the same body, to obtain grudging consent that the proposal should go forward to the CAE. The whole scheme nearly met shipwreck because of the use of the unfortunate word. Whatever the position in other forms of adult education, the college councils are, in this phase of adult education, scarcely the bodies 'to assist in maintaining the standard of work done'.⁹

In the Wellington area a change was early made to meet the new situation, by the abolition of the tutorial classes committee, and the use of the local advisory committee to carry out its functions. This cannot be said to be a happy solution. Shortly after the change took place there occurred an incident concerning alleged indiscreet statements made by a tutor. No attempt to weigh the rights and wrongs of the case can be made here; it is sufficient to say that the college council took action and dismissed the tutor despite a contrary report by the director of tutorial classes, and without consulting the local advisory committee. This introduced a very dangerous principle, involving the whole question of the liberty of the tutor. Under the normal WEA machinery, precedent would virtually have compelled the college council to consult the tutorial classes committee, which has the oversight of tutors and on which the council has a fifty per cent representation. Indeed, the WEA could

⁹ *Senate Committee Report*, 61.

not function without some such body as the tutorial classes committee; for this the local advisory committee is no effective substitute, for the LAC must represent interests other than those of the WEA, and is in consequence just as ill-fitted to deal with the internal workings of the Association as is the tutorial classes committee to deal with the wider field of adult education.

In Auckland the local advisory committee has been kept separate from the tutorial classes committee, though there has always been considerable overlapping of membership and function. Some of its most successful work has been done through sub-committees set up to advise the LAC concerning needs and developments in special fields. There are such sub-committees for women's work and dramatic work, and others have functioned from time to time for particular purposes. It is thus possible for the LAC to be kept informed of developments, while matters of internal politics are left to the individual agencies. The success of this organization depends upon the existence of a full-time director of adult education, who not only acts as secretary of the advisory committee but who also forms a permanent connecting link between the university college, of which he is a servant, the WEA, whose meetings he attends, and the various sub-committees of which he is a member. It is safe to say that, quite apart from the many extra duties that have arisen on account of the war, no part-time officer could handle efficiently a fraction of the work involved. But, partly for this reason, and partly because Auckland has for a long time possessed a rudimentary adult education centre with classrooms and office accommodation (inadequate though these have proved), the executive work is more and more passing into the hands of the director acting under the general oversight of the local advisory committee. The anomalies of this position are overcome by a fortunate coincidence of personalities and the minimum of inquiry into the strict letter of the law. Nobody but a trained

statistician could ascertain with any accuracy how much of the director's time is devoted to work connected with tutorial classes of the WEA and how much to the numerous other activities of adult education. The only organization at present capable of taking full and intelligent responsibility for the general oversight of adult education in the Auckland district is the LAC, which has through force of circumstances assumed many functions that are far more than advisory.

Certain minor problems, however, arise from time to time. One which constantly recurs is concerned with the arrangement of classes. To announce these as conducted by the university college is hardly correct, and would probably not be approved by some sections of the institution. The LAC is not set up to conduct adult education, and the title 'under the auspices of the local advisory committee' means nothing to the potential student. It is possible that some of these problems would not arise in districts such as Otago and Wellington where there is another organization to conduct part of this work. One cannot, nevertheless, avoid the conclusion that similar difficulties are bound to arise whenever an effort is made to extend the scope of adult education, and that the time is not far distant when the present machinery will be obsolete.

THE WORKERS' EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION

The WEA, which by tradition is 'non-vocational, non-party-political, and non-sectarian' has, as shown in previous chapters, undergone some modification, and has ventured more and more into the field of general adult education. While the four district organizations are linked through a Dominion Council, each district is more or less autonomous; but country discussion courses, though compiled by various districts, are made available throughout the Dominion. Dominion conferences and tutors' conferences, in normal

times held annually, give valuable opportunity for the discussion of matters of policy and technique.

The controlling body in each district is the district council, composed of representatives of affiliated bodies (trade unions and other bodies), co-opted members, and representatives of the classes. No satisfactory means has been devised to obtain representatives of country areas, though these contribute approximately half of the student enrolment. Technically the district council is responsible for the organization of classes and the control of the general affairs of the Association. It would, however, be difficult to define the duties actually performed by this body in any way that would apply accurately to all four districts. Particularly in country areas, the work of organization tends to be carried out more and more by the tutorial staff employed by the university college, who are selected for qualities that include ability to organize. Though the district council appoints representatives both to the tutorial classes committee and the local advisory committee, it does not at the present time employ any staff except for secretarial and office work.

The quality of work performed by the district councils varies. The keenest members, at least in some districts, are the representatives of the classes. Many of the affiliated trade unions have retained little more than nominal membership. Some of the councils have done useful work in the provision of improvements to classrooms, while certain short courses and the summer schools are organized by them in conjunction with the full-time tutors.¹⁰ At times there have been disagreements as to the limits of the function of the councils, and not a little suspicion, particularly on the part of older members, of anything that suggests a whittling away of their powers. Though one or two of the district councils still bring in considerable sums of money, their income today is not

¹⁰ There is a weakness in the organization of the WEA at this point. The quality of work undertaken at summer schools has to be safeguarded, and the appointment of lecturers ought, logically, to be a function of the tutorial classes committee.

of the relative importance in financing classes that it was before 1930. Despite some exceptions, the WEA as an Association has not concerned itself with matters of general education in the same way as the parent body in England has done. Even in the field of adult education it is not noted for its pronouncements on matters of policy. In point of fact, the policy has to a much larger extent been determined by the tutorial classes committees, and by the directors of tutorial classes.

Responsibility for the quality of the tutorial work of the Association nominally rests with the tutorial classes committee, made up of equal representation of the university college council and the district council of the WEA. For various reasons the TCC has tended to increase rather than decrease its functions, and in at least one area has a considerable voice in organization. The Wellington district has no TCC, the duties of that body being performed by the local advisory committee.¹¹

Canterbury had for some years a special piece of machinery—a WEA Tutors' Association, affiliated to and represented on the district council. Arising originally out of a dispute connected with the payment of tutors, it developed for a time into a live body for the discussion of teaching techniques and the suggestion of suitable courses of study. The experiment has not been duplicated in other areas, though conferences of tutors have been convened by tutorial classes committees. It often happens, too, that part-time tutors are appointed by the colleges as representatives on the TCC. Whatever the method adopted, it seems highly desirable that there should be some means of making the opinions of tutors known to those responsible for the organization. Tutors are in an excellent position to know the strengths and weaknesses of the work being done.

Those familiar with the work of the WEA in England will find that the New Zealand Association presents no

¹¹ See p. 186.

clearly-marked division of work into terminal courses, one-year courses, preparatory tutorial, three-year tutorial, and advanced tutorial classes. Indeed, in New Zealand, classes are not arranged to cover more than one year, and no guarantee of attendance or essay writing is required of students. The main distinction between one class and another is the length of time over which it is spread: a full course lasts from 18 to 22 consecutive weeks, a half-course for a minimum of 10 weeks, and a short course for an indefinite number. Full courses have in recent years accounted for little more than one-quarter of the student enrolment. Roughly one-half of the enrolments are made up of discussion and correspondence work carried on without the presence of a tutor¹². The chief historical reasons for the present position have already received attention. Here it may be pointed out that there has been no scale of grants designed to encourage advanced work; in the main, grants have been made irrespective even of total enrolment. There has never been in this country any system of regulations similar to those issued by the English Board of Education. It is doubtful if grants made on this basis would be welcome if accompanied by the condition of inspection by officers of the Education Department or any elaborate system of returns. The statistics at present kept by the Association, it may be added, would form a very precarious basis even for capitation grants.

Some attempts have been made to conduct advanced courses, but without great success. At the same time most, if not all, tutors vary the work from year to year and many students attend one course for several years, so that there is probably more continuity of study than appears at first sight. There is little use bemoaning the fact that three-year tutorial courses have vanished (if in fact they ever existed). What has been said of England is perhaps truer of New Zealand: 'Those who, a generation ago, would have wel-

¹² See Table II, p. 120.

comed this substitute for university education have had the real thing.¹³ Even in England, it has been said, three-quarters of the work of the WEA is concerned with work less exacting than the tutorial classes. 'Its principal work is the ice-breaking course of twelve or twenty-four meetings.'¹⁴ Considerations of finance, too, have affected the New Zealand situation. In a country where the population is notoriously mobile, a three-year course would almost inevitably tend to lose many of its members, and very small classes are relatively expensive.

A more serious criticism that many would make of the classes would refer to the amount of written work obtained from students. It must be admitted that, in all but a handful of classes, very little, or no, written work is done. At the same time, there has been a tendency to exaggerate the proportion of the population who are ready with the pen. Experiments such as the setting of problems to be discussed orally at a succeeding class meeting, the setting of quick quizzes, and the opening of discussions by students, have produced results in the few cases where they have been tried.

Experiments in method of presentation have not been common. Visual aids have been enthusiastically received when their use has been possible. Until recently cost has been a deterring factor, and the time involved in preparation of apparatus has been difficult to find. Film-strips and sound films have much to commend them and have been proved to be of great value in army education. In a few science classes attempts have been made to allow students to carry out experiments, but this method of instruction is not possible except where proper equipment is available, and the amount of very elementary work that is necessary before anything really interesting to adults can be attempted sets limits to its employment.

Traditionally, classes are of two hours' duration—the first

¹³ Williams, W. E. *The Changing Map of Adult Education*. (Reprint from the *Year Book of Education*, London 1938.)

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

hour being devoted to an exposition by the tutor and the second to discussion by the members of the class. The quality of the discussion varies according to the subject and the technique adopted by the tutor. At its worst discussion tends to be discursive, and many classes suffer from the man (or woman) with an obsession; such people, unless handled carefully, may side-track a whole class. Some subjects lend themselves more readily to creative discussion than others, and the large class cannot be handled by this method. To take part in discussion intelligently a student must be able to draw either on his own experience or on his reading, and the work of the classroom needs to be linked with the library.

All four centres possess libraries, and rural groups have access not only to books sent out from the centre but also to those provided by the Country Library Service. Some of the WEA libraries are well stocked with works related to the subjects of classes, though their effectiveness depends upon their accessibility to students. Where, as in Auckland, city classes are nearly all housed in one building and the library is available both before and after classes, considerable use is made of the book collection. Other centres are not all so fortunate. The use of class libraries has its limitations, and does not tempt students to venture into other fields of study; unless a reasonable number of duplicates is taken into stock, there is a danger of many classes being without books needed for their work. The limited library funds available to the WEA have for the most part been used to purchase important books on current problems, and with some justification no attempt has been made to build up comprehensive stocks of reference works. Eventually the problem of supplying books to adult students may have to be solved, not by encouraging individual associations and agencies to undertake the haphazard expenditure of large sums of money, but by the development of a regional free library service, supported by a 'central library for students' conducted by an extension of the CLS.

The provision of classrooms is a matter that must receive attention in the near future. At present the facilities available vary considerably and are nowhere adequate. Dunedin has a library and classroom housed in the administrative block of the university, but the increasing needs of the university make its tenure precarious; Canterbury has a secretary's office and classroom-library in the Trades Hall; Wellington a room used jointly as secretary's office, library, and classroom. Auckland is best equipped, in that it has undisputed use of one wing of a disused grammar school building, which provides accommodation for most of the adult education work of the city and includes accommodation for office and tutorial staff, a library, classrooms, a common room, and a little theatre. Much of this accommodation, however, has been improvised and is taxed to the limit; the building is old, without adequate heating or lighting, and not entirely weatherproof. Despite the great amount of voluntary effort that has gone into renovations, the building can scarcely be called ideal for its purpose; it has an air of shabbiness not conducive to regular attendance. At the same time it has provided a home for adult education in the community, and has demonstrated in many ways the possibilities of a properly equipped centre. It has become the natural meeting-place for student groups, and its existence has undoubtedly encouraged the growth of active, informal, discussion groups.

On the whole, however, the present accommodation for adult education is quite inadequate. It is hard to see any reason why adult education should be expected to take place under great physical difficulties, except the historical reason that it began as a form of charity designed to help people make up for their early disadvantages. Such people might be expected to be grateful for anything that came their way. But the atmosphere of the ragged school is hardly worth preserving in the twentieth century. Spartan courage is required to attend even interesting lectures in rooms where

lights are too glaring or too dim, where chairs are uncomfortable, where ventilation is inadequate, or where 'noises off' make concentration difficult. Such factors have been found to play their part in absenteeism in factories; small wonder if many people prefer the picture theatre or their own firesides. There is an unconscious humour in setting out to discuss art and design in a room that lacks all functional significance. That none of the cities has produced any real attempt to provide a properly equipped centre is symptomatic of the present stage in the development of adult education: it is only now coming to be regarded as a necessary function of community.

Outside the four main cities 'tutorial classes' are conducted in a few towns either by permanent tutors or by part-time tutors resident in the areas. Suburban classes are conducted in most districts. Most of the districts, too, have at one time or another attempted to extend their work by placing resident tutors in provincial towns. Thus South Canterbury has for long been regarded as a sub-district, and has at different times had a tutor stationed at Timaru; the Manawatu has been similarly served from Palmerston North; Southland has from the beginning been a clearly marked sub-district of Otago, though the continuity of the work was largely due to the late Samuel August; the Waikato, until recently, had a tutor stationed at Hamilton. This process of decentralization was interrupted by the economies of the depression, and again by the loss of tutors in the early days of war. It is only recently that attempts have been made to recover the lost ground. There can be little doubt that there is need for permanent tutors in many areas; the visiting tutor can scarcely hope to touch more than the fringe of the work that could fruitfully be undertaken.

Perhaps the most remarkable single feature of the more recent development of the WEA has been the growth of country discussion groups. About half of the total of 6,000 enrolments are made from country areas, and over forty

different discussion courses are at present offered for study. While such work has been pioneered by the WEA, and is still, in some districts, recorded as being conducted under the auspices of the Association, there has been a tendency in the last five years to regard an increasing proportion of it as the responsibility of the local advisory committees. For this reason, statistics concerning the country work of the WEA are often misleading. As already mentioned, many women's groups in the country have been formed in connection with the Women's Institutes and Divisions, and special courses have been written to meet their needs. Were it possible to undertake the organizing work on an adequate scale, there can be little doubt that an even greater expansion would take place.¹⁵ Discussion courses written by selected tutors are cyclostyled and sent to groups. The group, through its secretary, is invited to write in to the district office for explanations of points that are not clear, and to forward a report for comment.

In the work of the discussion groups the most important single factor is the technique of the leader. The occasional visit of a tutor acts as a stimulus, and where, as with the women's organizations, it has been possible to train leaders, valuable results have been achieved. The written word appears to lend itself better to discussion than the lecture. Good as the groups are when working alone, the almost embarrassing welcome that they give to someone with a new and informed outlook is the surest proof of the need for such stimulus.

Many of the discussion courses contain interesting matter, but, partly because of recent paper shortages, they have not been sufficiently attractive in appearance. AEWS has found

¹⁵ In one centre there are two cars available for country work, but they have only nine sound tyres between them. It is therefore not possible to have both cars on the road at any one time. Adult education is affected by many strange difficulties of this kind, and many enthusiasts have envied the ease with which transport appears to be available to the AEWS. The use of ordinary public transport does not enable the tutor to visit groups not on main routes (who most appreciate his assistance), or to move with the necessary freedom.

that its own discussion courses, well printed and illustrated, have a much wider appeal than the closely packed mimeographed sheets issued by the WEA, which are not always easy to read and have a 'home-made' appearance. Before the war a few courses issued by the WEA were printed, but left much to be desired so far as format and size of type were concerned. In criticizing the typewritten courses of the WEA, however, one has to remember that cost has been the main obstacle to improvement, particularly with those courses that are so topical as to be out of date in the space of two or three years. There are probably good grounds for having suitable courses prepared and issued by a central organization, so long as the needs of local areas can be adequately met. Courses written for the Australian WEA, some of them excellent, have recently been adapted for use in New Zealand. The whole question of discovering the ideal setting-out of discussion courses is one that should receive much more attention. The technique of preparing discussion material differs from that of preparing a lecture, and affects the method adopted in using the material when it reaches the group. Adults with painful childhood memories of the boredom accompanying the stock school method of 'reading round the class' scarcely welcome this method of mastering a subject, particularly when it is remembered that skill in reading aloud clearly and convincingly is not possessed by everybody, and probably deteriorates through lack of practice. The adult who finds himself tripped up by such words as 'misled', 'unstable', or 'compromise' is likely to lose his enthusiasm when he finds that his efforts cause amusement to other members of the group.

Few people outside the WEA are aware of the wide variety of subjects studied. The alphabetical list on pp. 198-9 gives the titles of courses and classes offered during the past twenty years. An examination of this list of more than 120 titles shows that most fields of study and activity have been

TITLES OF WEA COURSES AND CLASSES

| | |
|--|--|
| After the War What? I & II | Essay Writing |
| America and the Pacific | Ethics |
| Ancient Civilization | Family Cycle |
| Anthropology | Farmer in N.Z. Economy |
| Architecture | Farming Problems |
| Art | Films |
| Art, Literature, and Music | Folk Dancing |
| Astronomy | Genetics |
| Biography | Geology |
| Biology | Germany |
| Bolshevism and Fascism | Government |
| Books and Stories for Children | Greek Art |
| Botany | Greek Life |
| British Democracy | Greek Literature |
| Child Psychology | Health |
| Changing World | Health of Mind |
| Civics | Heredity |
| Clear Thinking | History |
| Co-operative Movement | History (Economic) |
| Countries in the Pacific | History of Painting |
| Current Affairs | Home Life |
| Danger of Words | Horticulture |
| Democracy | Human Geography |
| Drama | Human Nature and the World Today |
| East and West after the War | Human Welfare and Industrial Psychology |
| Economics | Hygiene |
| Economic Problems of a Changing World | India |
| Education | International Affairs |
| Empire Problems | Insulation |
| Esperanto | Japan |

| | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Language and Society | Physics |
| Latin America | Physiology and Hygiene for |
| Law | Women |
| Literature | Plan and No Plan |
| Literature and Social | Poetry |
| Change | Political Problems |
| Local Government | Political Science |
| Logic | Post-War Problems |
| Man and Leisure | Psychology |
| Man as Worker | Public Finance |
| Man's Place in Nature | Public Speaking |
| Maori Problems | Religion |
| Marketing | Russia |
| Medical History | Scenery |
| Modern Age | Science (General) |
| Money and Exchange | Science and Society |
| Money, Means, and Men | Social Aspects of Engineering |
| Music | Social Problems |
| Nationalism | Social Psychology |
| Natural History | Sociology |
| New Zealand Labour | Social Work |
| Movement | Status of Women |
| New Zealand Problems | Trade Unionism |
| New Zealand's Resources | Understanding Society |
| Nutrition | United States |
| Opera | Utopias |
| Pacific | War in 1940 |
| Pacific Exploration | Western Civilization |
| Pacific Problems | Workers' Control |
| Parenthood | World Affairs |
| Paths to Progress | World History |
| Personalities | World Peace |
| Philosophy | Writers between Two Wars |
| Physical Education | Writers with a Message |

the subject of experiment at one time or another. The most serious omissions have been in the sphere of practical expression in the arts and crafts, though even here valuable work has been done in music, the writing of English, graphic art, drama, and folk dancing. There has been a tendency, for the most part healthy, for an experiment undertaken in one district to be tried out in others. The fact, however, that many of the courses appear for only one year is a further sign of the abandonment of the principle of the three-year cycle. The titles, of course, give no indication of the quality of the work undertaken, and it is always dangerous to make too many deductions from any list of offerings in adult education. It would, for instance, be foolish to suggest that all the topics represent subjects in keen demand at the time. Courses have often been arranged after consideration of what people ought to be interested in, and the guess of organizers has not always coincided with felt needs. Further, a course can be offered only when a suitable tutor or author is available. All things considered, the extent of the offerings constitutes a proud record, and the WEA has certainly not laid itself open to the charge that it has neglected experiment.

But apart altogether from the more formal means of instruction, the WEA has done much to encourage significant forms of expression. This has been particularly true of the drama. Both Auckland and Canterbury have experimented in this form of art, and the annual production of the Auckland centre ranks as one of the important events in the dramatic season in that city. The scheme for community drama originally conducted under the auspices of the Association for Country Education has since 1940 been under the control of the Canterbury WEA. The tutor engaged for this work had considerable experience in play production under Shelley, and works on the plan of taking up his residence for a limited period (perhaps seven or eight weeks) in a selected district. Here he coaches and instructs

drama groups and supervises the production of plays. At the end of a period of intensive work the plays are presented in public, sometimes at a non-competitive drama festival. The objects of the scheme have from its commencement been twofold: the encouragement of interest in the drama as a form of art, and the stimulation of social life through the provision of community projects. The amount of nervous energy required in overcoming the difficulties inseparable from play production in poorly equipped halls may be imagined when it is pointed out that the tutor, who is a one-man, self-contained production unit, may have more than twenty one-act plays under production in a single month. Many country groups—Women's Institutes and Divisions, dramatic societies, and similar bodies—have been given a new lease of life as the result of this work, while the community has been surprised at this practical demonstration of what can be achieved by its members.

Contrary to popular belief the students attending WEA classes form a fairly representative sampling of the adult community.¹⁶ Statistics kept by the Association, as has been remarked on more than one occasion, leave much to be desired. Figures given in most of the returns refer to student enrolments, and consequently count a student attending three classes as three students. This fact, together with the different categories used for classification in different years, makes comparisons difficult to draw. In Table V, the most recent available official returns (1939, 1940, and 1941) are given, together with comparable returns for 1930. These figures are

¹⁶In addition to the material presented below on this point, reference may be made to a study by G. W. Parkyn of the intelligence of adult students in some twelve groups in New Zealand (209 persons). Using the Otis Self-Administering Test, Higher Form B, he found in 1937 that the groups formed 'a normal unselected sampling of the community. There is about the same proportion of very superior and superior intelligences among the members as there would be in the community; there is about the same proportion of inferior intelligences also. Only in the average or normal group is there found a significant difference, that there are fewer normals and more dull-normals than there should be in an unselected group, and even this difference is possibly smaller than at first appears.' (Parkyn, G. W. 'The Intelligence of Members of Adult Cultural Associations', unpublished M.A. thesis 1937.)

presented in percentages of total enrolments. The figures in Table V do not discriminate between men and women and include country groups as well as tutorial classes conducted in the main centres. In order to examine more carefully the composition of tutorial classes, the author arranged for a questionnaire blank to be filled in by members of city classes in session in the Auckland centre during the month of May, 1944. Usable returns were made by 439 students, representing 590 student enrolments (or 74 per cent of the total enrolments at that date and over 90 per cent of the students in

TABLE V
ANALYSIS OF WEA STUDENT ENROLMENTS (PERCENTAGES
OF TOTAL) 1930, AND 1939-41

| Year - - - | 1930 | 1939a | 1940a | 1941a | Average 1939-41 |
|------------------------|-------|--------|-------|--------|-----------------|
| Manual and craft - - | 17.1 | 27.8 | 23.8 | 19.8 | 23.8 |
| Professional - - - | 5.2 | 8.9 | 9.6 | 6.8 | 8.4 |
| Farmers - - - | — | 9.8 | 6.1 | 3.7 | 6.5 |
| Office and shop - - | 19.2 | 13.2 | 18.8 | 15.7 | 15.9 |
| Teachers - - - | 10.9 | 9.3 | 9.6 | 8.5 | 9.1 |
| Domestic duties - - | 33.2b | } 31.0 | 11.4b | } 45.5 | } 36.3 |
| Other or unspecified - | 14.4 | | 20.7 | | |

Notes: a Otago figures not available for these years.

b The difference between these two figures is not so significant as might appear at first sight, because from 1940 onwards much of the women's work is recorded as having been undertaken by other organizations.

average attendance).¹⁷ The sample may fairly be taken as adequately representing the Auckland city students; no attempt was made to cover the country groups.

Of the 439 students replying, just over 30 per cent were men, and just under 70 per cent were women. The occupational distribution for men and women separately, and for the total group is shown in Table VI. In passing, it may be noted that women students have probably outnumbered men since about 1925.

The Auckland figures in Table VI may be usefully

¹⁷ A high percentage, nearly 100 per cent of all students present on the evenings that the classes were visited, was obtained. Only one class was not completely covered.

compared with those in the last column of Table V. From this comparison it will be seen that the result obtained by combining 'unskilled' and 'skilled trade' is almost identical with the Dominion figure for 'manual and craft'; the Auckland figure for 'professional' is roughly one-and-a-half times as great as the corresponding figure in Table V; similarly the Auckland figure for 'office' and 'shop employees' (27 per cent) is considerably higher than that shown in the other table; the Auckland figure for 'teachers' is about half that shown in the 1939-41 figures. Most of these

TABLE VI
OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF 439 WEA STUDENTS,
AUCKLAND, 1944 (PERCENTAGES)

| Occupational Group | Men | Women | Total |
|---------------------------------------|------|-------|-------|
| Unskilled - - - - - | 14.7 | 1.6 | 5.7 |
| Skilled trade - - - - - | 35.6 | 9.9 | 17.8 |
| Business owner or executive - - - - - | 8.15 | 4.3 | 5.5 |
| Serving in shop - - - - - | 3.0 | 3.9 | 3.7 |
| Office employee - - - - - | 9.6 | 29.3 | 23.2 |
| Teacher - - - - - | 3.0 | 5.9 | 5.1 |
| Professional - - - - - | 14.8 | 11.9 | 12.8 |
| Student - - - - - | 3.0 | 1.3 | 1.8 |
| Domestic duties - - - - - | — | 29.6a | 20.3 |
| Other - - - - - | 8.15 | 2.3 | 4.1 |

Note: a Of the 90 women recorded as engaged in domestic duties (i.e. a number equal to 74 per cent of the married women), husband's occupation was recorded in 54 cases as follows: skilled trade 13, business owner 15, office employee 8, teacher 3, professional 11, other 4

results are to be expected when it is remembered that the Dominion figures include a large proportion of country students. Further comparisons would scarcely be warranted, because of the different bases of computation used in the two sets of figures. For present purposes it is sufficient to indicate that the Auckland sample may be taken as fairly representative. It may be repeated that the Dominion figures refer to student enrolments; the Auckland figures to be used in what follows refer to students, irrespective of the number of classes attended.

Table VI brings to light some interesting facts. About half the men and a little over one-tenth of the women belong to the classes 'unskilled' and 'skilled trade'. Considerably more than half the women are accounted for by the two groups 'domestic duties' and 'office employee'. Shop assistants account for under 4 per cent of the total. The different percentages shown in the three columns indicate fairly clearly how statistics for total enrolments may obscure differences. If the last column alone is taken into consideration, it would appear that a WEA group might be expected to be made up somewhat as follows: about one-quarter would be office employees, one-fifth would be women (mainly married women) engaged in domestic duties, a

TABLE VII
AGE-DISTRIBUTION OF 439 WEA STUDENTS,
AUCKLAND 1944 (PERCENTAGES)

| Age group | Men | Women | Combined total |
|-------------------------|------|-------|----------------|
| Under 20 - - - | 6.7 | 4.6 | 5.2 |
| Over 20, under 25 - - - | 9.6 | 15.2 | 13.4 |
| Over 25, under 30 - - - | 11.9 | 15.4 | 14.4 |
| Over 30, under 35 - - - | 14.8 | 20.7 | 18.9 |
| Over 35, under 40 - - - | 12.6 | 10.2 | 10.9 |
| Over 40, under 45 - - - | 13.3 | 10.2 | 11.2 |
| Over 45, under 50 - - - | 8.1 | 8.9 | 8.7 |
| Over 50, under 55 - - - | 5.2 | 5.9 | 5.7 |
| Over 55 - - - | 17.8 | 6.6 | 10.0 |
| Not given - - - | — | 2.3 | 1.6 |

slightly smaller fraction would be engaged in a skilled trade, about one-eighth would be members of one of the professions (including nursing), teachers and unskilled workers together (and about equally) would make up about one-tenth, while business owners and executives would account for one-twentieth of the total. The composition of individual classes would vary considerably, but it would be a very bad guess to picture a WEA class as coming from one stratum of society, however that stratum were defined.

No information has hitherto been available concerning

the age-distribution of WEA students. The percentages falling in each of nine age-groups are given in Table VII. From this table it will be seen that the peak for men occurs in the group over 55, and for women in that for 30-35. The median for the whole group lies between 30 and 35. Fewer than one-fifth of all students are under 25. It may be objected that this result is to be expected in war time; but tutors of many years' standing have noted the failure of the WEA to attract members of the lower age-groups, and attempts to build up junior branches have met with little success.¹⁸ Occupational training and evening classes probably attract some of the younger 'student type', and not all adolescent courting can be expected to take place under the auspices of the WEA. At the same time the schools cannot wholly escape blame for failing to inspire pupils with a desire to continue their education when they leave school. Before the war there were only 5,000 students in the whole Dominion over 18 years of age in technical evening classes, and the estimated population for each age-year was about 28,000. On the basis of the present figures not more than about 1100 young people under 25 years of age are reached by the WEA. The age-distribution shown in the table demonstrates the difference between a WEA class and a typical class in the university; it has been estimated that

¹⁸ The figures in Table VIII suggest, however, that a slightly higher percentage of students under 25 may be attracted to Auckland classes than to classes in England. Two studies have been published by R. Peers, one in *Adult Education in Practice*, 61. (London 1934), and an article in the *Year Book of Education* (1940), 150. Reduced to percentages the former table for approximately the same number of students as that given in the present study shows: (a) the same peak group, (b) a slightly older median group, and (c) more than twice the percentage of women and less than half the percentage of men over 55. By a curious coincidence the number of students used by Peers in the first study is almost identical with that of the New Zealand investigation, though women make up only 45 per cent of his total, whereas they constitute nearly 70 per cent of the present study. For purposes of comparison the percentages in the successive age groups (men and women) in Peers' first study are as follows: 3.4, 11.1, 16.0, 17.5, 14.1, 10.4, 11.1, 8.4, 8.0. The results obtained in the second study (East Midland Area) are similar so far as the percentages of totals are concerned; the percentage of men over 55 is approximately the same, while that for women in the same age-group is twice as large as in the New Zealand figures.

about two-thirds of all university students are under 21 years of age.

Faced with a WEA class, then, a tutor will note that the ages of his students vary considerably. There are a few young students, a large number that might be classed vaguely as 'middle-aged', and a fair sprinkling of older men and women. Among them will usually be one or two, sometimes very active in discussion, whose speech betrays an English or Scottish background; occasionally one finds among these folk a sensitiveness to social class (not to say an embittered outlook) born of early hardship and a long struggle to make up for lost educational opportunity. There are probably fewer of these than there were some years ago.

The educational background of the Auckland group reflects to some extent the development of educational facilities during the last forty years. Thus about 30 per cent of all students had attended a secondary school for at least four years, and nearly 18 per cent had attended the university for at least one year. On the whole the women¹⁹ had received more schooling than the men, some 30 per cent of whom had received only primary schooling. As might be expected, the younger age-groups are on the whole 'better schooled' than the older. The details are given in Table VIII. The results shown in Table VIII may surprise those not acquainted with WEA classes. It would appear that adult education is not simply a means of providing for those who have missed the opportunity for secondary education. That at least three-quarters of the total have had at least some secondary schooling, and yet feel the need for continuing their education, is only another example of the fact, too often ignored, that secondary education is not a substitute for adult education. It is also significant that secondary pupils appear to be more aware of the need for adult

¹⁹ This fact is noted also by Shona A. Roscoe in an investigation for the Diploma in Education carried out in Canterbury in 1939. Miss Roscoe's figures account for 28 per cent of the students on the rolls in that area, and several of her findings are borne out in the present study.

education than do those who go out into the world equipped only with a primary schooling. May it not happen that the raising of the leaving-age will increase rather than diminish the demand for adult education? There are grounds for believing that, if the group considered here were compared with a normal sample of the population, the WEA group would be found to include a higher-than-normal percentage of the better educated, and a lower-than-normal percentage of the less educated.²⁰ But there is a less pleasing fact concealed in this table: a very large number

TABLE VIII
PERCENTAGES OF WEA STUDENTS WHO HAD RECEIVED
VARIOUS AMOUNTS OF EDUCATION AUCKLAND 1944

| Type of education | Men | Women | Total |
|--|------|-------|-------|
| Primary schooling only - - - - | 31.6 | 14.4 | 19.8 |
| Primary and night school, but not secondary - | 12.8 | 4.1 | 6.9 |
| Not more than primary and three years' secondary - | 30.1 | 48.7 | 43.0 |
| Full secondary (i.e. four years or more) - | 25.5 | 32.8 | 30.3 |
| University (included in above) one year - - | 6.0 | 5.1 | 5.4 |
| two years - - | 4.5 | 4.1 | 4.2 |
| three years - - | 4.5 | 2.6 | 2.8 |
| four years or more - | 8.0 | 3.8 | 5.2 |

of students must have been away from the influence of any educational institution for about ten years—ten very important formative years. A still larger number (possibly amounting to 70 per cent) must have left a gap of at least eight years. And we are considering here the very small fraction who enrol in adult classes.²¹ The real tragedy is that

²⁰ A sample survey of over 500 dairy-farmers carried out by Doig showed 70.11 per cent to have primary education only, 24.86 per cent to have up to three years' secondary, 4.93 per cent to have full secondary or more. Of Doig's group only 1.10 per cent had had university education. The figures are not, of course, really comparable.

²¹ How small this fraction is may be emphasized by pointing out that in greater Auckland, which contains more than one-eighth of the population of New Zealand, there are probably in each of the five-year groups between 13,000 and 18,000 people. The highest number in any such group in this survey is 83, which (even allowing for students from whom returns are not available) works out at much less than one per cent. It is extremely doubtful if two per cent of the population is reached by institutionalized adult education of the type considered here.

there is an immensely large group who are never reached at all after they leave school.

As has already been pointed out, three-year classes do not exist. Nevertheless over 40 per cent of the students have attended classes for more than one year, over 25 per cent for more than two years, over 18 per cent for more than three years, 12 per cent for over four years, and 10 per cent for more than five years. A few of those replying have remarkably long terms of association with WEA classes—several for ten years, a few for twenty years, and one for the whole twenty-eight years of the existence of the Association ('except for one year when I was in England')! Two students had belonged to the Association in England and had 'naturally looked for it' in this country. The fact that nearly 60 per cent of the group had enrolled as new students is capable of several interpretations, and it is impossible to say whether this is a normal percentage.²²

A study of the combination of classes attended by students would yield no valuable result, because up to four groups may meet on one night. More than two-thirds of the sample are enrolled in one class, a quarter in two classes, and the remainder in more than two.

The vexed question of essay writing was approached by asking simply, 'Have you ever written essays for classes?' The answer 'Yes' was given by only 10 per cent of all students. Certainly not more than about 40 per cent of students of two or more years' standing can have written essays. Half of the group regularly took notes, however, and about half the men and one-third of the women did regular preparation for classes.

An attempt was also made to find out the most effective means of recruitment. Students were asked how they came to be interested in the WEA. The commonest replies in order of frequency were: personal recommendation (56 per

²² The Auckland WEA had engaged in a more intensive publicity campaign at the beginning of 1944 than in previous years though how effective this was in bringing about enrolments is not certain.

cent), newspaper advertisement (20 per cent), radio (6 per cent), other form of advertisement (5 per cent), through a trade union (2.7 per cent of the total and 7.5 per cent of the men).

Naturally enough, a considerable number of students found some difficulty in explaining the motives that led them to join classes. The questionnaire offered three suggestions: Did you hope that lectures would be of use to you in your present daily work? Did you seek to prepare yourself for some other kind of work? and Did you seek merely to provide a leisure-time interest? The percentage-frequencies of replies to each of these three questions are shown in Table IX.

TABLE IX
REASONS FOR JOINING CLASSES (PERCENTAGES^a)

| | | | | Men | Women | Total |
|------------------------|---|---|--|------|-------|-------|
| Of use in present work | - | - | | 21.7 | 20.6 | 21.0 |
| Prepare for other work | - | - | | 24.3 | 10.8 | 15.3 |
| Leisure-time interest | - | - | | 36.2 | 65.0 | 55.4 |
| Other reason | - | - | | 17.8 | 3.6 | 8.3 |

Note: ^a The number of multiple answers was so small that no attempt was made to separate these from single replies

It seems fairly clear that the vocational motive is much less powerful than the 'cultural'; many of the classes, indeed, were unlikely to be of vocational value except to a very few. But spontaneous comments added—the commonest was 'to improve the mind'—give support to this generalization. If anything, men appear to be more vocationally minded than women, though the term 'other work' was interpreted by some to mean work for the community. A few students added the information that they hoped to play a part in postwar reconstruction. A very few had hopes of 'understanding and equipping themselves for the class struggle'; but the latter were far outnumbered by those whose replies indicated that they joined 'just for the fun of it'. A small number expressed the need for 'understanding their children

when they were small, and keeping up with them as they grew older'. A few housewives welcomed the opportunity of escaping from the care of looking after a family.

It is frequently claimed that the influence of adult education is spread through the community because of the active part which adult students play in other social groupings. Such a claim is made, for instance, by the leaders of the Danish Folk High School movement, which is thought to exert a major influence in the Danish co-operatives. An exact measure of the influence exerted by the WEA

TABLE X

OTHER INTERESTS OF STUDENTS AS INDICATED BY GROUPS OF WHICH THEY ARE ACTIVE MEMBERS (FIGURES IN BRACKETS INDICATE NUMBER HOLDING OFFICE)

| | Men (135 cases) No. per cent | | Women (304 cases) No. per cent | | Total (439 cases) No. per cent | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|------|--------------------------------------|------|--------------------------------------|------|
| Public or commercial library | 39 | 27.9 | [3] 158 | 52.0 | [3] 197 | 45.0 |
| Church - - - | [5] 33 | 24.5 | [12] 81 | 26.6 | [17] 114 | 26.0 |
| YMCA, YWCA - - | [3] 5 | 3.7 | [6] 30 | 9.9 | [9] 35 | 8.0 |
| Other educational association | [5] 25 | 18.5 | [3] 81a | 26.6 | [8] 106 | 24.2 |
| Musical, dramatic, or art assn. | [1] 11 | 8.2 | [4] 69 | 22.7 | [5] 80 | 18.5 |
| Social club - - - | [2] 25 | 18.5 | [15] 60 | 19.8 | [17] 85 | 19.4 |
| Trade union - - - | [6] 33 | 24.5 | 12 | 3.9 | [6] 45 | 10.3 |

Note: a There are apparently more 'educational' groups available to women than to men.

in New Zealand would require a much more refined technique than was possible in the course of the present study. But to obtain a rough measure of this influence and to find out what other groups attracted students, a list of nineteen well-known associations was presented, the students being asked to mark those of which they were *active* members, and to indicate also those in which they held office. The 439 students checked a total of 753 associations, the commonest number checked being two. Since the results may be of some interest, the most commonly checked items or groups of items are presented in Table X.

One or two unexpected results appear in this table. Less than half the students belong actively to a public or commercial library, though many of the remainder use the WEA library. More students are active members of churches than of trade unions (despite compulsory unionism), and more hold office in church groups than in trade unions. It is difficult to see, therefore, that this group of WEA students is as closely allied to organized labour as WEA groups are usually supposed to be. It is true that some difference of opinion might arise concerning what constitutes an 'active member'. But the question was deliberately framed to detect the extent to which students identified themselves with the different groups. The fact that this item was not checked would therefore indicate either that the student was not a member, or that (if a member) he did not feel strongly about his union membership. Another pointer in the same direction is the fact already mentioned that under three per cent of the students heard of the WEA through their trade unions. It should be noted that nearly one-quarter of the men signified active membership of a union; but the same proportion indicated membership of a church. While it is not proposed to argue from these figures that the word 'Church-goers' should be substituted for 'Workers' in the title of the Association, the fact that so few identified themselves with unions has an important bearing on the whole constitutional machinery of the Association. For obvious reasons, no mention was made on the questionnaire of membership of a political party. There was, however, a space left for 'other similar society'. This was used by some, but very few indicated any political party.

As a check on the Auckland results, a group of 177 Wellington students (55 men and 122 women) from six classes, representing 251 student enrolments, were asked to fill in the questionnaire. The Wellington figures showed substantial agreement with those obtained in the larger Auckland sampling. None of the main deductions made

from the Auckland figures appears to have been upset, and, where unexpected results were obtained in the Auckland survey, they appear also in the Wellington figures. The main points revealed in the Wellington group are as follows:

(1) Domestic duties appears as the occupation for 25.2 per cent of the total, the professional group accounts for 14.1 per cent, shop and office employees comprise 19.1 per cent, and skilled and unskilled together make up 23.6 per cent of the totals. There is considerable diversity in the figures for men and for women.

(2) The peak for men occurs in the 40-45 group, that for women and for the total in the 35-40 group. The median for the total falls also in the 35-40 group. Fewer than 14 per cent of all students were under 25 years of age.

(3) Thirty-five per cent of the men, 51 per cent of the women, and 46 per cent of the total had attended secondary school for at least four years. Some 26 per cent of the total had attended university. Nearly 15 per cent of the total had received only primary schooling.

(4) Nearly 72 per cent were attending one class only.

(5) Reasons for joining classes fall in the same order as do those advanced by Auckland students: leisure-time interest (69 per cent), of use in present work (30 per cent), preparation for other type of work (13 per cent), and other reasons (about 2 per cent).

(6) Interests of students as shown by groups of which they are active members are on the whole similar: library (52.5 per cent), church (36.7 per cent), drama, art, or music (26.6 per cent), social club (20.3 per cent), trade union (16.9 per cent), other educational group (9.6 per cent), YMCA and YWCA (4.5 per cent). Only one man and one woman held office in unions.

(7) The percentage of students hearing of the WEA through a union was, for the total, 2.3 per cent. For the men alone, it was nearly 13 per cent.

If the composition of the student body as a whole is adequately represented by these samples, there is raised an important question concerning the present administrative machinery of the Association. The WEA has always claimed to provide a strong consumer representation in the district council. The Auckland District Council, at the time that this survey was made, consisted of fourteen voting members elected by classes, two representatives of the Council of the University College, three representatives of student clubs, one representative of the Education Board, twelve co-opted members, and eighteen delegates from trade unions. In point of fact thirty trade unions were affiliated and entitled to send delegates, but twelve had not availed themselves of the privilege. Each class is entitled to elect a deputy representative who may attend meetings, but who may not vote unless the delegate is absent. In the light of these figures, 'consumer representation' is less of a reality than is commonly supposed. Of the total student body about 10 per cent are 'active members of trade unions', while trade unions have 35 per cent of the seats on the district council and could, if they so desired, have 48 per cent of the seats, or even more. As against this, the city and suburban classes and the clubs have together only the same representation as the trade unions, and would be in nearly a one to two minority if the unions cared to be fully represented.²³ Figures already quoted tend to show that the unions are effective neither in sending their members to classes nor in making the WEA known to their members. It would seem, therefore, that even in respect of the city and suburban classes the principle of democratic control by consumers is not well exemplified. If account be taken of the very numerous country groups which at present are not represented at all, the position becomes even less

²³ While the Wellington, Canterbury, and Otago District Councils show a slightly higher percentage of student representatives than is the case in Auckland (the percentages, if club representatives are added, being 31, 38, and 61 respectively) the representatives of classes are outnumbered (in all districts except Otago) by the representatives of trade unions.

satisfactory, particularly when it is remembered that the district council has the right of electing half the members of the tutorial classes committee and a large portion of the local advisory committee. The recent (and probable future) expansion of adult education is producing a situation in which it may no longer be possible to maintain that the WEA is the only or even the main agency in the field, and it is equally clear that the Association, as traditionally constituted, cannot handle many of the newer types of work without denying the very principle that made it originally a vital force. It may be disappointing to those who have watched the growth of the Association during more than a quarter of a century to see other agencies with more potential growing power causing a relative dwarfing of its stature. Yet this is at least in part a consequence of the successful pioneering work of the WEA itself; and even if the Association does not become absorbed in a wider movement, a philosophical acceptance of the changed situation may enable it to do thoroughly within a clearly defined province what it has bravely but somewhat unsuccessfully attempted to do over a wider area. Such a concentration of effort would clear the WEA of a certain amount of unconscious pretence (if the phrase does not offend) in some of the statements that have been made about the intensive nature of the work that the WEA has done. For there are still some people within the movement who read into its present activities a type of work that has never really become established in New Zealand, just as there are others who exaggerate the advantages that accrue from the alliance between adult education and the unions. In point of fact there is little really advanced work done at present, and there is little done at all that could not as well be conducted by an agency that had no specific alliance with trade unions. There is much to be said in favour of meeting demands for adult education that may arise from organized labour, as from any other group in the community, and it may well be true

that such work presents special problems and must be conducted with due consideration to the special needs of organized labour. But the WEA in 1944 is in reality engaged in adult education for the community as a whole, and a large part of its clientèle has needs of a different character from those that the WEA was established to satisfy. Words written of the English WEA are almost literally true of the New Zealand Association: 'Of the aggregate of students who use WEA classes, an annually increasing number does not care two hoots who provides the class so long as it is non-vocational, interesting, and companionable'.

As an Association, however, the WEA has contributed much to the social life of its students. In the course of a year a surprising degree of *esprit de corps* develops in many classes, and, where cafeteria facilities are available, social life develops naturally out of the work of the many clubs that have been formed within the student body.

The university colleges have adopted a scheme whereby a bursary is offered annually in each district to enable a WEA student of exceptional ability to receive free tuition in a full university course. The selection of bursars, which is made on the joint recommendation of the tutorial classes committee and the tutors, is usually very rigorous. Many students so selected have proved successful; some have done brilliant work. Of several who have attained high academic honours a few have proved very valuable as tutors in the movement; at least two at present occupy university posts in this country; one has held posts in three different university colleges and in at least one university overseas; another, after serving as an adult tutor both in this country and in Australia, occupies an important post in the administration of the Australian Army Education Service; several have distinguished themselves in other than academic walks of life. There have been failures, of course, but on the whole the bursary scheme has proved a sound investment.

No account of the WEA would be complete without some mention of the summer schools which have become a regular feature of the work of the Association in most of the centres. The schools are usually held for from seven to ten days commencing on Boxing Day, and are attended by between fifty and one hundred and fifty students. Some of the trade unions offer bursaries to enable certain of their members to be present (though, curiously enough, such bursaries are not all taken up). In normal times students come to the schools from all parts of the Dominion and from all walks of life. The programme usually includes one main or central course and two or more subsidiary courses. The most solid work has been done where discussion groups have been formed to make an intensive study of the main topic or of some problem raised by a recently published book. At times too much has been expected of students unaccustomed to prolonged study (four courses of lectures and an afternoon discussion), but there can be no doubt concerning the stimulus that has been given, to city and country students alike, by the brief period of residential life. Formality quickly disappears in the sharing of 'fatigues', and the reserve natural in the circumstances seldom outlasts the first day of school. The informal contacts with people of differing outlook, no less than the stimulating effect of the more formal lectures, have served to set many a student off on a re-examination of the bases on which his opinions have been founded. The custom of inviting lecturers from other centres to deliver a course of lectures has provided new zest to the work of both tutors and students. The Auckland WEA, as the result of a gift from the late Sir George Fowlds, now possesses a permanent camp site in hill country some miles from the city, and has raised sufficient money to begin the erection of a permanent building, which will eventually provide facilities for week-end schools.

THE LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEES

In previous pages the suggestion has been made that the local advisory committees have tended to become agencies for the provision of adult education. Either loosely under the control of these bodies, or under some rudimentary university extension scheme (as in the Canterbury University College district) there has recently been a considerable expansion of work, for example, lunch-hour discussion groups and particularly women's groups. This latter work is not technically under the control of the WEA, but, in both town and country, university tutors used for classes organized under the WEA take some part in it either as organizers or lecturers. In Auckland, where women's classes have become very important, there exists a women's advisory committee (acting in certain matters as a sub-committee of the local advisory committee) charged with the duty of recommending courses and assisting in organization. Two representatives of the committee are members of the LAC. Much of the detailed planning is undertaken by the Director of Adult Education, and it has been found necessary to appoint two staff-tutors to work mainly in women's groups. Other recent appointments to the staff have been made with an eye to the probable expansion of work of this type.

Classes for women (usually held in the early afternoon) are organized in the suburbs and provide opportunities for the study of a wide range of subjects—health, physiology, nutrition, family budgeting, child study, family relations, reading for children, and literature, have all been included. As in every other branch of adult education, an appetite once created tends to extend its range. Though for a year or so the class may be content to study child psychology, there arrives a time when the problems of the adult community press for attention. This is as it should be; and many of the best classes have gone far beyond the purpose for which they were first formed. Some have changed their time

of meeting so that husbands as well as wives could attend; others have gone on from a study of the young child to a study of the adolescent, and finally have wanted to know something about grown-ups. One women's class has been in continuous existence for five years, and arranges each term for a visit to some institution whose work bears some relation to the topic discussed during the term. The attendance averages about twenty, and many of the members have an almost unblemished attendance record. It is even said that each member has her favourite chair, and dislikes having to use another!

While there are probably many women who resent being segregated into 'women's classes', the early hours of the afternoon are frequently the only ones during which mothers with young children can attend. In some instances the co-operation of an enlightened school teacher has been secured, and Form II girls have been provided to entertain the toddlers who of necessity accompany their mothers. At other times an experienced kindergarten teacher or a Karitane nurse has been available to mind the very small children. It is not unusual for such a class to assemble with three or four perambulators, as many push-chairs, and two or three sturdy youngsters of four years of age. The keenness of these young mothers is a demonstration of a need. Under present conditions the children must come with the mothers; there is no other place for them. To see such classes, in a new housing area, crowded into the basement of a church (the only available meeting-place in the whole settlement) is to be forcibly reminded of the lack of vision of those who allowed such settlements to grow up without some form of community centre. One sometimes wonders if the Reports of the English Board of Education are ever read in this country. In 1936 one of them dealt with the need for community centre buildings, and the Nottingham William Crane Scheme has been in operation since 1933. But the position is not much better in longer-settled

areas. Only one who has tried to lecture on a squally day to a group of women seated on 'infant forms' in a school shelter-shed can really appreciate the extent to which the essential fabric of community life and education is lacking.

Country groups are supplied with special discussion material, and are visited by a woman tutor, who may remain in the district for some days. Here again the sacrifice demanded of adult students is unreasonable. One group that meets on market day is regularly attended by a farmer's wife who arrives by hitch-hiking—as often as not by favour of the driver of the cream lorry or the pig waggon! Women's winter schools have been held in country centres, where the solid work done by the very able women who attend them has to be seen to be believed. One such school had a programme commencing at nine in the morning and continuing with breaks until nearly ten at night. Even then the last lecturer, who happened to be dealing with music, found it difficult to escape, and did so only on condition that he continued his demonstration in a private house. Schools have been held, too, in the city, and have the advantage of bringing town and country women together, while at the same time providing for some the valuable experience of community residential life. Nor must one neglect the value that accrues from a pooling of experience brought by the students from the very different rural communities; for rural life varies in quality to an extent that is too seldom realized. While these more dramatic highlights are important, it is the follow-up work that will ultimately tell in the improvement of the quality of community life, and there can be little doubt that there are very great opportunities waiting to be seized. The organization can readily be arranged through WIs and WDs; what is needed is sufficient staff to meet the demand, and places suitable for the work to be undertaken.

Those who are inclined to dismiss as unimportant such short periods of educational experience should be reminded

that the army relies on this technique for much of its special instruction, and that the time spent in a week's winter school may be in the aggregate quite as long as that occupied in a year of weekly classes. A few hours under a capable instructor can open up all kinds of new interests; even those who have never before seriously tried to make a design can, in a very short time, learn the elements of lino-cutting and can look at design in an entirely different way thereafter. It was Kristen Kold, one of the pioneers of the Danish Folk High Schools, who spoke of winding people up so that they would never run down.

Another experiment of interest—the formation of a school of drama—has been undertaken by the Auckland Advisory Committee. The school is directly supervised by a management committee which is represented on the LAC. Courses have been planned in play production, use of the voice, stage movement, and body movement. For various reasons the school tended for a time to specialize in the production of dance drama, a form of dramatic art which, in the opinion of some critics, has serious limitations and is scarcely capable of the appeal exercised by the spoken drama. While doubtless providing for a limited number a means of rhythmic self-expression, considerable physical exercise, some training in expressive movement, and the attraction of novelty, dance drama appears most effective when used to deal with themes which lend themselves to stylized or symbolic treatment. Some attempts to introduce realism have, to be frank, verged on the unintentionally comic. As an experimental form of art it may yet have some possibilities, and one can only try to approach it with an open mind. As a means of adult education, however, it must be criticized on two scores: it belongs to a rarefied atmosphere in which breathe most freely those who particularly enjoy doing something different; and it may easily turn out to be a blind alley. From its strenuous nature, too, it is quite unsuited to those who suffer from any physical defect. A

school of drama, as an agency of adult education, has every right to experiment in fresh branches of dramatic art, but it must also cater for those of humbler and more conventional taste who want to learn something of the technique of a more universal if more commonplace art form. This is particularly the case in a country where the commercial stage has practically nothing to offer, and where the obvious need is for experienced producers. More recently attempts have been made to develop the school of drama on a broader basis, but the difficulty of obtaining staff has limited achievement.

THE ASSOCIATION FOR COUNTRY EDUCATION

The Association for Country Education, since completing in 1939 the five-year term for which Carnegie funds were provided, has undergone considerable modification, partly as the result of changes in finance, and partly because of the many difficulties that have arisen from the war situation. The work of the drama tutor, which had been of a different character from much of the other ACE activity, and had from the beginning its headquarters in Christchurch, was taken over by the Canterbury WEA in 1940. The change has been largely administrative, since the drama tutor spends part of each year in the Otago district, where he acts in conjunction with the Otago WEA. In return, one of the home science tutors of the ACE has been seconded to the Canterbury district, where she works under the joint auspices of the Local Advisory Committee and the Women's Co-ordinating Committee.

During the five years of Carnegie support the annual budget of the ACE stood at between £3000 and £3750, of which up to one-third had been provided by fees charged for classes and other services. Since 1940 the work has been mainly dependent on Government grants made through the university colleges on the recommendation of the Council

of Adult Education. For the years 1941-44 the budget has fluctuated between £1000 and £1800, while receipts from fees have never reached more than fifteen per cent of these sums. In effect this has meant that the staff of the ACE, over and above the transfers already mentioned, has been considerably reduced. At the present time (1944) the permanent staff consists of one tutor-organizer and one home science graduate who is in charge of the office; both of these are stationed in Dunedin. In addition, one tutor is stationed in Canterbury, and part-time lecturers are employed as occasion demands. During 1943 the tutor-organizer was engaged in war work, so that the effective staff for that year consisted of two. The war has affected the work in other ways. The shortage of labour in country areas has weakened the demand for country classes, and the women's organizations from whom class members were drawn have been largely occupied in patriotic work. The Junior Home-Makers' Clubs have been most seriously affected; many of the members have moved into town to take up wartime employment, and a large number of the remainder are doing men's work on farms. Petrol restrictions have prevented adequate country organizing work, and even those women who have the time to attend meetings are all too frequently prevented from doing so because of difficulties of transport. The loss of the resident country tutors and the difficulty of obtaining suitable replacements have been serious blows to the effectiveness of the work.²⁴

Certain functions of the ACE, notably the provision of radio talks and the preparation and dispatching of loan packets and boxes, have been continued, but on the whole the

²⁴ The salaries offered by the ACE have never been on a generous scale. The payment to graduates acting as tutors (£300 or thereabouts) can scarcely enable the Association to compete with other adult educational agencies which usually offer about £400 a year. As the organizer has pointed out in her reports, the work requires special abilities. A teacher of first-rate ability and attainments in a technical high school would either be earning more than £300, or would have reasonable prospects of earning eventually more than £400. Further, security of tenure is much greater in the teaching service.

recent development of the ACE has been disappointing. The thoroughness of its coverage in a limited area, which had been one of the most pleasing features of the scheme, has largely disappeared, and there is even a danger that the full benefit of the years of preparation may be lost. The problems of transport and lack of leisure time, while serious, are scarcely so serious as the difficulties of continuing the work with inadequate finance; and in view of the peace-time budgets of the ACE, it is not easy to see that the present financial provision is sufficient.

It is an interesting fact that a demand for work on the lines of that conducted by the ACE appears to exist in the other three districts. Canterbury, as already mentioned, has a home science tutor on loan; the Sarah Anne Rhodes scheme has operated with some success in the Wellington area²⁵; Auckland has found plenty of work for a tutor trained in home science. There is a danger, of course, that the demand for home science work, like any other specialist service, may after all be limited. That is why such specialist services should be linked with other adult educational facilities so that, through a single broadly-conceived organization, a wide selection of activities may be provided in any given community. There has in the past been more than a suggestion that the gap between home science on the one hand, and the so-called 'cultural' activities of the WEA on the other, has appeared from both sides to be greater than it really is. The successful provision of adult education will be achieved largely by avoiding false distinctions of this kind, through the adequate co-ordination of all the agencies capable of giving meaning to the life of the community. If the existence of separate associations prevents this co-ordination, so much the worse for the associations. After all, they exist for the provision of adult education in the community; the community does not exist to keep alive associations. This

²⁵ The SAR scheme has been curtailed during the war by the seconding of the SAR Fellow to the RNZAF for work with the armed forces.

does not mean that specialist services should be divorced completely from the centres of research and information; it does mean that in each district specialist branches of study should be offered on equal terms with other varieties of adult education.

ARMY EDUCATION

For some years after the outbreak of the present war New Zealand had the unenviable distinction of being almost the only British country without some system of army education. Training of soldiers had been undertaken with pronounced success, and the methods adopted for the instruction of entrants to the Air Force had attracted attention from other countries. But for the general education of enlisted men little was done until the formation, late in 1942, of the Army Education and Welfare Service. Largely owing to skilful direction and enthusiastic co-operation from the officers and men selected to handle the work, rapid progress was made in a fairly short time. Indeed, a legitimate criticism is that, once decided upon, the scheme was launched too quickly and without sufficient preparation, so that enrolments were invited for non-existent courses. A large staff was assembled,²⁸ and in each district there was set up a regional civilian committee representative of various bodies likely to assist in furthering the recreational or educational aims of the service. Unit education officers were appointed and schools of instruction were formed to explain to them the duties that they were required to undertake. Never before in the history of the country had so much money been spent on a project for adult education; never

²⁸ The headquarters establishment of AEWS consists of a Director, Assistant Director, and eight Staff Officers, plus clerical assistance. Each military district is staffed with an Assistant Director, second in command, and NCO understudies of most of the Staff Officers. Each formation of brigade or equivalent strength and each large camp has one full-time education officer and an education NCO. The staffing of the special services (libraries and films) equals in number the rest of the education establishment. (See statement prepared for the Ministerial Conference on Education, October, 1944.)

before had such a large staff been assembled; never before had there been possible such a co-ordination of the services of the community. Those who in civilian life have had to struggle to make ends meet in providing adult education may be pardoned a little envy of the resources AEWS could command.

It has not been possible, in the course of the present survey, to make any close investigation of army education. From observation it appears that the work of AEWS has fallen into the following divisions:

(1) Individual study courses have been arranged either by correspondence or with the assistance of schools, technical colleges, or university colleges. AEWS, through its headquarters, has provided numerous courses of a vocational or technical nature designed to meet the needs of men and women who wish to prepare themselves for civilian life. Students undertaking university studies have been assisted by the provision of textbooks and general information.

(2) Discussion groups have been encouraged and, where formed, have been supplied with talks by civilian or staff lecturers, with relevant films, or with books.

(3) Current affairs discussions, based on fortnightly bulletins issued by AEWS, were made compulsory, and have been conducted with varying success. Various experiments have been tried out, including the use of panel discussions and brains trusts.

(4) Cultural groups have likewise been encouraged, and concert parties, dramatic companies, chamber music combinations, and gramophone records have been used to provide entertainment. The facilities of the Broadcasting Service were made available for this purpose.

(5) More recently experiments have been conducted in group tuition in music, the National Broadcasting Service providing a subsidy of half-a-crown per half-hour lesson towards the fees of the instructor. The Manual and Technical Regulations have been extensively used for many types of classes.

The whole scheme has been supported by the establishment of libraries, the provision of reference books, and a

request service for supplying books. The large film library available for the use of lecturers has proved most valuable.

Some idea of the needs revealed by AEWS may be gathered from the fact that some 10,000 enrolments in correspondence study courses were received from soldiers in the Pacific and New Zealand, that 2,700 men and women were enrolled in university and professional courses, that, in one of the three military districts alone, the value of craft material sold by AEWS has exceeded £400 a month. Army education has drawn attention to the appeal of many branches of adult education that have been too often neglected in the past. Thus there has been an extraordinary demand 'for courses of a non-academic type in "bread-and-butter" subjects such as book-keeping, farm book-keeping, animal husbandry, grassland farming, arable farming, trade mathematics, applied electricity, radio communication, trade drawing, petrol-engines, Diesel engines, and carpentry'.²⁷ In short, AEWS has amply demonstrated that there is a very large latent demand for education, which can be revealed when, in the words of the Director, vague desires are 'sharpened into precise demands by trained guidance and careful but restrained publicity'. Another healthy sign has been the establishment of operatic and other groups first within AEWS and later as independent societies.

Since the work of AEWS is likely to have a marked effect on civilian adult education after the war, it seems desirable to draw attention to certain differences between the civilian and the soldier which, if not given due consideration, may lead to some undue optimism. In the first place, the civilian is not isolated from his normal social contacts—he has cares that are largely absent from camp life. His day is not mapped out for him with army precision, and he has a personal responsibility in finding the source of his next meal. A careful examination might show that boredom is a

²⁷ A summary of the work of AEWS was published in the Reports and Memoranda prepared for the Ministerial Conference on Education, Christchurch, October 1944.

common civilian complaint; but it is boredom of a different kind from that which develops in a segregated (often monosexual) community. The civilian is not a 'sitting shot' for the purveyor of adult education, and he is not linked with his fellows in a single comprehensive organization through which every member of the community can be reached. To reach him it is necessary to approach him as an individual, or through one or more of the voluntary social groups of which he may be a member. For only a comparatively few soldiers is the army more than a passing phase; for most it is an interruption in what they regard as their real avocations. It is one thing to provide facilities for a camp of, say 1500 men, and quite another to provide educational opportunity for a town of the same number of inhabitants. It is also necessary to remember that AEWS caters for two groups that are already provided for in civilian life: those whose professional education was interrupted by war service and who, but for the war, would have been pursuing their future calling; and those who in civilian life would be educating themselves through the private study of books. Further, the appeal of recreational facilities, when offered as a distraction from the monotonies of camp life, may be much greater than that of the same facilities offered against a civilian background.

All this is not intended to show that adult education has no lessons to learn from the organization of AEWS. It is a warning against applying desert tactics to jungle warfare, if the latter is not too hard a description of civil life. AEWS has undoubtedly shown what can be achieved in a short space of time if adequate finance and staff are made available; it has trained many men and women who may be extremely useful in civil adult education after the war; it has broken down the ridiculous barriers that are too often erected between vocational and cultural education; and, without engaging in indoctrination, it has entered on the field of controversy by encouraging thought on civic and

international affairs. But any attempt to launch such a scheme in a big way after the war without a different set of tactics should not be made without considerable thought. The writer makes this observation regretfully, for there is something impressive about the speed with which AEWS made up for a late start; in some (but not all) ways it would be pleasant to see all this machinery switched over intact to civilian work. But not in all ways, for an adult education movement must have a healthy degree of decentralization, and must be well-founded in the life of the community. That at least has been the experience of the past, in Denmark and England particularly, to mention the two countries that have probably contributed more than any others to our knowledge of the principles of adult education.

THE FEILDING COMMUNITY CENTRE

In the seven years since its establishment²⁸ the Community Centre at Feilding, 'an extension for adult learning and recreation of Feilding Agricultural High School', has amply demonstrated the value of such a focus for the life of a small country town. Planned and established with the co-operation of the Education Department by L. J. Wild, Principal of the High School, and placed under the skilful direction of H. C. D. and Gwen Somerset, it has quietly established its position and come to be accepted as a necessary part of the educational and cultural life of the town and the surrounding district. The building in which it is housed, originally a technical school, has been altered and refurnished to meet expanding needs. The building is owned by the High School Board of Managers, and the comparatively low cost of upkeep is provided out of the capitation grant of the high school, to which the two permanent members of the staff are attached. Though working in close collaboration with the high school it is for practical purposes

²⁸ See Chapter VII, p. 165.

an independent unit. So great have been the demands for extension of the work of the Centre that a building three times as large could be fully used for most of the time. 'As far as possible,' Somerset has written, 'we have made it a pleasant place, an adult place, with comfortable chairs and adequate heating.'²⁹ The accommodation consists of two large lecture-rooms, a small reading-room, a large room converted into a little theatre, and an office.

Though the first function of the Centre is a teaching function, to use Somerset's phrase, nothing could be more inaccurate than a picture of the Centre that showed men and women sitting in rows listening to improving lectures. Classes there are in plenty, but they have for the most part been formed in response to demands arising naturally out of the Centre's busy life. People listen to lectures, of course, but they have also things to do, and the activities provided have formed a fertile breeding ground for new interests. The programme seeks to meet the needs of the individual, of the home, of the community, and of the citizen as he tries to understand the larger world outside his immediate environment. For the individual there are provided advice on reading, classes in the writing of English, in literature, in languages, and in science. To assist in developing the quality of home life there are nursery classes (which not only serve the children, but provide for their parents the opportunity of learning something of the physical, social, and emotional needs of children of all ages) and classes in home decoration, 'marriage planning', and the like. In fact, most of the problems that arise in the search for more meaningful ways of conducting a home have been the subject of classes and discussion groups. For the community as a whole the Centre has provided numerous opportunities for recreation—keep-fit classes, dancing, drama, the study and practice of play production, music and poetry, and educational films.

²⁹ Somerset, H. C. D. 'What is a Community Centre?', in the *New Zealand Listener*, 21 April 1944.

World affairs have been regularly discussed in an open forum attended by upwards of forty men and women. It is significant that the activities organized in Feilding are increasingly attracting school-leavers.

The Centre also serves as a meeting-place for numerous groups providing for the recreational and educational needs of the town, but not themselves directly organized by the Centre. Among such groups have been the British Music Society, the New Education Fellowship, and the local branch of the St. John Ambulance Association.

A third function of the Centre, less organized but very important, is that of acting informally as a local representative of other educational agencies, putting inquirers into touch with the resources that best meet their needs, and generally acting as an information bureau. The Centre has a reference library selected so as to supplement the book stocks provided by the Country Library Service, which now operates in the borough.

But to indicate these main divisions of the work carried out, or to say that the student enrolment was over 400, or to record that over 100 children attended nursery classes in 1944—striking though these figures are in a town of fewer than 5,000 inhabitants—is to give only the bare bones of what has been done. The innumerable personal adjustments that tactful private discussion of problems has brought about, the quickening of the social life of the community, the development of taste and discrimination in the difficult art of living, the inspiration that has been given to some of the local teachers, the effect of a club where folk can drop in to look at a book or discuss a picture—these are the human things that defy measurement. And they are the real tests of the work that has been done in Feilding. It is teaching—yes. But it is more: a very human kind of education.⁸⁰

⁸⁰ For a full account see Campbell, A. E. *The Feilding Community Centre*. Wellington 1945.

RISINGHOLME COMMUNITY CENTRE

In Opawa, a suburb of Christchurch, there was established in 1944 a second community centre with State support. Risingholme, a property originally belonging to a well-known Canterbury family, was purchased by a Christchurch resident and vested in the City Council. The Centre is planned to have a considerable amount of autonomy. The warden, who is nominally attached to the staff of the Technical High School, is paid in accordance with the salary scale for the technical branch of the teaching service, with a small addition made available through the Canterbury University College District Advisory Committee of Adult Education. He will, it appears, do no teaching in the school, and will be largely independent. The general committee set up in connection with the Centre consists of some twenty to thirty members (local residents, co-opted members, and representatives of the City Council). For each of the main activities there is a sub-committee—for example, for finance, control of the property, cultural activities, youth work, social activities, and play centre—while an executive committee composed of the officers of the Centre, and the chairman of each of the sub-committees, is presided over by the Warden. So far no permanent assistant warden has been appointed.

It is much too soon to attempt any evaluation of the work of the Centre. A drama group and a class in child psychology (both under WEA auspices), a play-reading circle, a fortnightly discussion group, at which at least twenty minutes are devoted to current affairs, and a play centre (open on two half-days each week) are already in operation, while a fortnightly social evening provides for such entertainment as cards, dancing, music, and the showing of films. A large detached stable is being fitted up as a workshop and hobby room. There are great opportunities (and great difficulties) inherent in the Risingholme experiment, which should do much to provide valuable data on the effectiveness

of such community centres. The very beautiful grounds and attractive rooms of the old house may compensate in some measure for the lack of such essentials as a little theatre and a gymnasium. Provided those responsible for the scheme are prepared to exercise patience and to make fairly generous provision for equipment, there is no apparent reason why the experiment should not finally be successful, but it may well take several years to produce the results that many hope to obtain.

CHAPTER IX

Cross Section: The Borderland

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CONCENTRATION on the major agencies that fall within what may be loosely called the 'system of adult education'—agencies formed specifically to carry out the work—may easily lead one to place a large part of adult education out of focus. For in the all-too-easily obscured background are countless organizations and informal social groupings that supply the cultural and recreational needs of the community; there are, too, many institutions in society that indirectly make for the education of adults. To neglect these would be to give a distorted picture. But any attempt to sketch in such background details leads to a difficulty of another kind: Where shall one draw the line? There is a sense in which all life is educative; it was said of Athens in its hey-day that the city itself was an education. Ultimately, the kind of education that adults receive is determined to a greater extent by the kind of community in which they live—by the associations formed for specific though not professedly educational purposes—than by any number of classes, study groups, or public lectures. Again, the names given to associations within a community are not always helpful; for it is what happens in a group, rather than its professed aim, that determines its educational significance. A political pressure group, coming into being for the achievement of a relatively

narrow end, may disclose a need for research into what at first sight appeared a simple issue; in that way it becomes educational. Another group, with high-sounding educational professions, may so far degenerate as to cater only for closed minds. Labels, one finds, are untrustworthy guides to the real function of associations. Still greater difficulty arises from the time-worn wrangle concerning the so often falsely opposed terms 'vocational' and 'cultural'. When vocation enters the door, does culture necessarily fly out of the window? A very real conflict of educational philosophy, particularly with relation to adult education, occurs at this point. Does an interest in graphic art or music, if connected with the sordid matter of earning a living, cease to be cultural? Is adult education concerned only with encouraging the amateur (in the modern sense of dilettante)? These and kindred questions must be left over for the moment.

If it were possible to describe all the currents and cross-currents of community life—to give, as it were, a complete picture of community—one could then say, Here is your real adult education! But, since that is not possible, an attempt is made in this chapter to deal with what may be called the borderland of adult education—a vast territory occupied by agencies and groups which, though not formed specifically for the general education of the community, educate none the less. A few are designed to meet specific educational needs, perhaps vocational, and play a part only incidentally in general adult education. Some perform valuable work in other directions, and to include them here may look like criticizing them for inadequately fulfilling functions that they are not primarily designed to perform. It is the educational significance of these agencies, groups, or institutions, that is to be considered, and their relegation to the 'borderland' is not intended to imply any slighting of their position in the community. What they have in common, and what distinguishes them from the agencies described in the previous chapter, is that their work in

general adult education is either indirect or incidental: they have either other aims or a more limited appeal. Accurate evaluation of all these groups and agencies is impossible; almost any one of them might be made the subject of a special inquiry. It is their general effect as 'temptations to investigation' (or better, 'temptations to a fuller life') lying in the path of the New Zealand citizen that is to be described here.¹

FORMAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES

In the main centres and in many smaller towns technical schools, technical high schools, and, in some instances, district high schools, conduct evening classes (mainly for the study of vocational subjects) under the Manual and Technical Regulations of the Education Department. Under the Free-Place Regulations of the Education Department any adult may receive free continued education for a period equal to the unexpended portion of school life to which his free place entitled him. But there are certain limitations imposed in respect of the number of subjects to be studied. In the years immediately preceding 1939 some 5,000 students (less than 40 per cent of the total enrolment in evening classes) were over eighteen years of age. This number, it may be noted, was approximately equal to the number of students enrolled in the non-vocational classes of the WEA. There have in recent years been important experiments in what may be called 'technical extension work', and Wellington Technical College has issued correspondence courses for extra-mural students. The larger schools provide facilities for physical education and arts and crafts in addition to the vocational courses that are the main concern of their evening departments. While a few of the

¹ Some of the information contained in this chapter is based on an investigation carried out in 1940 on behalf of the Auckland Local Advisory Committee. An attempt was made to study about 240 such groups in the Auckland Province. Material gathered from sixty replies to questionnaires was supplemented by observation, and material obtained from other sources.

schools are well equipped for the work of general adult education, the part which they play in this sphere, despite the extensive use that has been made of the technical schools by the Army Education and Welfare Service², is but a poor shadow of the work conducted by similar institutions in England. In the larger towns difficulties of accommodation and staffing account in part for this shortcoming. It may be remarked in passing that the present antiquated system which provides vocational instruction of young workers mainly in evening classes leaves little time for their wider development. One finds examples of youngsters who are attending vocational classes for four nights each week.

Part of the failure of the technical schools to meet the demands of adult education arises from the peculiarities of educational organization in New Zealand. There is no local education authority having oversight of all branches of education within a relatively small district, and the filling-in of gaps is a matter more of chance experiment than of careful planning. New Zealand primary schools too frequently close their doors at 3.30 in the afternoon and remain empty until 8.30 the following morning. 'Trespassers Will Be Prosecuted' rather than 'Join Keep-Fit Classes' or 'Attend Hobby Classes' is the main injunction that most school authorities offer to the general public. There have been happier efforts at arousing public interest in certain districts. Here and there an enthusiastic school teacher, realizing the need, has tried to link the school with the agencies of adult education. Some of these experiments have been distinctly successful and have brought a rich reward in public response. But few of the intermediate or secondary schools, and fewer still of the primary schools, have been planned with adult education in mind. The spectacle of forty adults seated in an

² Nearly 1500 technical enrolments have been made by AEWS in one district alone, and classes have been formed to meet the requirements of AEWS in many subjects that are not normally provided for by technical schools. Indeed, the Manual and Technical Regulations, generously drawn though they are, must have been strained to the limit to meet the demand.

unheated classroom during the depths of winter in desks designed for eight-year-olds is one that comes repeatedly to the writer's mind and that forms a striking contrast to the relatively palatial equipment of the better English senior schools.

Of the nine education boards, five were conducting classes for adults in 1944, and two others had done so in previous years. In all, they have had a combined enrolment of as many as 3,000 students studying woodwork, dressmaking, cookery, and engineering in classes organized under the Manual and Technical Regulations. The boards in Nelson, Southland, and Auckland, in years before the present war, have used itinerant instructors working in conjunction with women's organizations. A recent experiment in Brown's Bay, an outlying suburb of Auckland, has been the establishment of a group of evening classes in mathematics, English, and foreign languages. Associations for the organization of technical classes exist also at Ellesmere and Temuka, in the Canterbury district.

The Education Department's Correspondence School, originally established for the education of children in remote areas, has recently extended its activities to serve the needs of adult students. Many parents of enrolled pupils have welcomed the opportunity of taking up the study of general subjects. A number of farmers have been provided with courses approved by the Department of Agriculture, while among the students of the Correspondence School are also inmates of prisons and Borstal institutions. The subjects offered to adults include agriculture, woodwork, commercial subjects, commercial art, needlework, housecraft and handicrafts. An interesting development of the School has been the publication in the monthly circular of a list showing important items in the programmes of the National Broadcasting Service. Many parents, too, have listened with appreciation to the School's own broadcast lessons.

There are in New Zealand several large correspondence

colleges conducted for private profit, some being branches of reputable international concerns, and a number of private commercial colleges giving personal instruction. The enrolment of all these institutions probably runs into many thousands. New Zealand has fortunately been spared the worst varieties of bogus 'diploma mills' that have flourished in some countries³, and most of the correspondence schools operating here give an honest service to their clients. There are probably a few less desirable 'institutes' catering for personality development, and making extravagant claims based on some semblance of modern psychology; but no study of such concerns has so far been made.

THE PRESS

New Zealanders have always been great readers of newspapers, and there can be little doubt that the press plays an important part in the formation of public opinion. Some four or five of the largest dailies are widely read in both town and country, and there are also several weekly publications with a large circulation. The standard of journalism has been favourably commented upon by overseas critics. In the matter of foreign news we are comparatively well served, and it is possible for a reader in this country to examine a wider range of foreign news than he would find in any one of several of the larger English dailies. Scare headings and panic writing have been almost entirely absent. Special informative articles on general topics probably have considerable value in defining issues, and the discussion of educational problems has been given considerable space on occasion. Encouragement of local writers varies considerably; a few of the best journals have consistently looked for writers of talent, and have attracted to their staffs many who have eventually made their mark in New Zealand.

³ See for instance Woodward, Ella. *Culture at a Price* (New York 1940), and Noffsinger, John S. *Correspondence Schools, Lyceums, Chautauquas* (New York 1926).

literature. The political power of the press has usually been considered to be great. It is, however, noteworthy that in two recent elections a Government has been returned in spite of the continued and almost unanimous opposition of the daily newspapers.

THE RADIO

Reference has been made in a previous chapter to the advent of radio in New Zealand. In 1936 the Broadcasting Board was abolished, and the National Broadcasting Service (a department of the Government) was set up in its place. At the same time commercial broadcasting became a State monopoly. Recently the 'National' and 'Commercial' stations

TABLE XI
RADIO RECEIVING LICENCES ISSUED IN CERTAIN YEARS

| Year | Total number of licences | Number per 100 of population |
|------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1930 - - - | 53,407 | 3.59 |
| 1933 - - - | 93,489 | 6.08 |
| 1936 - - - | 192,265 | 12.22 |
| 1939 - - - | 317,509 | 19.54 |
| 1942 - - - | 371,211 | 22.71 |

Note: By way of comparison, it may be noted that the returns of December 1938 show the number of licences per 100 of population in other countries as follows: Denmark 20.58; Sweden 19.47; Great Britain 19.30; Australia 16.05.

have been brought under the one director, and function as branches of the one service. Apart from some rationalization of staff and equipment the two networks of stations retain much of their individuality. Both branches of the service are under the control of a Minister of the Crown, who has power to ban any programme.

The increasing importance of the radio may be inferred from Table XI, which shows the number of receiving licences issued in certain years. There are in all twenty-one stations, of which eight (four national and four commercial) have a considerable coverage; the remainder are less power-

ful, or operated for only part of the day, and are designed either to provide alternative programmes to those offered by the main stations or to effect more complete coverage in a country which, because of geographical features, offers its fair share of problems to the technician. In almost all parts of the country the indiscriminate listener can have the radio with him daily from 6 a.m. till 11.15 p.m., except for a few silent periods that have been introduced to save electricity. The discriminating probably have the choice, even with the use of a moderately powerful receiving set, of at least three programmes for almost every evening and at least two for most hours of the day. Though no accurate census has been taken to ascertain listeners' preferences, it is probable that the commercial stations have a larger audience than the non-advertising stations.⁴ Various reasons have been advanced for this preference: the 'slickness' of the technique; the personal touch; the novelty features (quizzes and request sessions); the serials; the proportion of 'popular' music; and the radio personalities that the commercial stations, unlike their competitors, have encouraged. Whether this list is exhaustive, and which of the items is most important, it is impossible to say without an investigation far beyond the scope of the present study. That the commercial stations are believed by advertisers to increase the sale of their wares is beyond question. It is also true that the commercial stations have been more adventurous in their experiments, some of which are undoubtedly of educational significance. It would be untrue to say that they always gild the pill of instruction.⁵

An inevitable contradiction occurs, however, when the State operates an advertising radio service. The listener has no guarantee that all the products advertised are of high quality or even desirable. One hears a health talk by an

⁴ A social survey undertaken by pupils of the Wellington Technical College in 1939 showed that both by day and by night the local commercial station was overwhelmingly more popular than any other station. This was the case also in two other post-primary schools.

⁵ 1ZB, Auckland, has featured a 'straight' educational talk of twenty minutes' duration each Sunday morning for more than two years.

officer of a Government department followed, perhaps not directly, by advertisements for products which, if not harmful, are at least scarcely such as he would be likely to recommend. Any piece of necessary propaganda in the interests of the community runs the risk of conferring what psychologists might call a 'halo effect' on somebody's sure cure. It may be argued that the same thing occurs in the press. But there is a difference: the trained reader of a newspaper skips most of the advertisements; the radio listener has, one imagines, scarcely yet learned to shut his

TABLE XII
PERCENTAGE OF TIME ALLOTTED TO EACH OF THE MAIN
DIVISIONS OF RADIO PROGRAMMES, NATIONAL STATIONS,
1939 AND 1941

| Type of offering | Percentage of total time | |
|---|--------------------------|------|
| | 1939 | 1941 |
| Music - - - - - | 72.58 | 64.0 |
| News and reports - - - - - | 6.27 | 19.8 |
| Educational and general talks - - - - - | 3.82 | 3.9 |
| Children's sessions - - - - - | 4.46 | 3.7 |
| Plays and sketches - - - - - | 6.34 | 5.0 |
| Churches and devotional - - - - - | 2.75 | 3.2 |
| Sporting and commentaries - - - - - | 2.18 | 0.4 |

Note: The increase in 'News and reports' is to be largely accounted for by the outbreak of war.

ears to 'spot' advertisements, or to the advertising matter skilfully injected into a fireside or sink-side chat. There is also something incongruous in hearing teachers, members of one branch of the State service, roundly condemning the 'evil effects' on youth of certain programmes (probably with statistically unreliable evidence) while a State-owned radio service is presumably seeking bigger and brighter programmes of a similar kind. These and other points may be clarified by further research.

The national (i.e. non-advertising) stations offer a wide selection of programmes, the official analyses of which are given in Table XII. Such a list of offerings gives no indica-

tion of the quality of the matter broadcast, the most important criterion in judging the educational value of the radio. It is not proposed to enter upon this delicate matter, except to remark that no broadcasting policy is likely to please all the people all the time, and that only the person who listens with discrimination, choosing his programmes as he chooses his other entertainment, has any very sound justification for complaint. Anyone who expects to have his every mood satisfied all the time is foredoomed to disappointment in any publicly-owned service. As a second qualification, it must be pointed out that the radio does not exist simply to instruct people for seventeen hours a day. That, however, does not mean that the educational significance of the radio is confined to the four per cent of time allocated to 'educational and general talks', or that entertainment and education are properly contrasted terms. The BBC has more than once been criticized for its paternal attempts to improve people. Nevertheless there has been an increasing appreciation of the endeavour made by that body to provide quality in all divisions of its programme.

Educationally, it is probably true to say that the greatest shortcoming of broadcasting in New Zealand has been the timidity exercised in dealing with controversial matters, almost to the extent of dodging live issues at all costs. One has the impression that there is more liberal-mindedness in the presentation of differing views in British broadcasts (even, it may be added, during the critical days of the present war) than has been shown at any time in this country. Up-to-the-minute comment with a New Zealand flavour has not been common. A radio service, to function as an agency for defining important issues in a democracy, must occasionally deal with controversial subjects, and there should be little valid objection to a technique that would permit the presentation of even diametrically opposed views, provided they are presented in quick succession, and without seeking for a clear-cut conclusion.

Series of 'winter talks' have been conducted for some years, and are arranged by advisory committees set up by the broadcasting service in the four main centres. These talks have brought to the microphone experts in many different subjects, and have usually been given some continuity by virtue of a central theme. The ACE has for many years prepared talks on special problems of interest to women, and the Department of Agriculture arranges regular broadcasts to farmers. No large-scale effort has been made, however, to use any of these talks as a basis of discussion by listening groups. Such a technique probably has its limitations, but it might, if linked with the work of other educational agencies, give stimulus to groups in country areas. The use of some such plan as that used by the BBC Brains Trust (with, one hopes, a little more reality and less exhibitionism) has something to offer. Gardening experts and sports commentators appear to have little difficulty in obtaining questions from their listeners. A similar scheme applied to more controversial matters might also prove successful.

What is perhaps most required is healthy experiment. At present there appears to be little encouragement to initiative in individual station directors, with the result that the pace is set like that of a cavalry charge. The use of one of the many subsidiary stations, even if complete coverage were not effected, as an experimental station, aiming at quality in every item broadcast, and having a definite educational slant, is a scheme that might produce valuable results. It would at least provide a means of answering one way or another many questions that at present are presumably answered by speculation.⁶

The *New Zealand Listener*, the official organ of the

⁶ A somewhat similar suggestion was apparently made by a committee of the Senate of the University (*Minutes* 1934, 54) some ten years ago. For a time, Station 1ZM, which after its incorporation in the service had retained a certain individuality, was taken over by the American armed forces. Now that this station has been relinquished by them, it might serve the function suggested here.

NBS, has in recent years become an important supplement to the broadcasting service, devoting a considerable portion of its space to discussions of the arts, current affairs, and education. It has also set a very high standard in film criticism, and in its health notes, and it shows a sturdy independence of outlook that might well be copied in the parent service. Linked as it is with the radio, its potentialities are very great indeed.

THE CINEMA

While the commercial stage plays only a small part in the cultural life of New Zealand, the cinema is almost universal, and is, for many New Zealanders, the only form of dramatic entertainment (other than the radio) of which they have experience. In each of the last three years for which figures are available, well over thirty million admission tickets were sold, which, as someone has calculated, means that that disembodied spirit, the 'average New Zealander', visits the picture theatre a little more frequently than once a fortnight. Generalizations about the effect of films on New Zealand life are likely to be misleading, and are usually based on inadequate data. It is certain, however, that the cinema affects life in so many subtle ways that it must be ranked as potentially a very important educational influence. For it has this advantage over the 'legitimate stage': the technical quality of performance in the most remote hall need not differ materially from that in a 'first-release' city theatre.

Films exhibited in this country are about as good (or as bad) as those available in most countries where the influence of Hollywood has been felt. Government regulations require that a proportion of British films (25 per cent) shall be included in each yearly quota. In practice, even in normal times, films produced in countries other than Britain and the United States are seldom shown. All films for public

exhibition in New Zealand are subject to State censorship, and, if approved, are placed in various categories—approved for universal exhibition, recommended for adults, and not suitable for children. The censor's recommendation is displayed both at the theatre and in the advertisements appearing in the newspapers. It is not possible to say what effect such recommendations have, particularly when one finds on a 'double-feature' programme films in two different classes, and, in a children's matinee programme, a film recommended for adults. In larger towns and in cities there is a choice of theatres, ranging from two to more than thirty; in smaller towns people probably have to take what is offered at the only theatre. With a few notable exceptions, newspapers and journals have not developed film criticism to a point where it can make the picture-goer critical of the artistic value of the film he sees.

Theatres showing only documentary and news films had, some years ago, a very brief life in a few of the larger cities. At one time and another, too, film societies have been established to encourage the private screening of films which, though not commercially profitable, have been considered important as documents or as works of art. Their success has, however, been limited. More promising experiments were undertaken before the war by the Dominion Museum in Wellington, and by the Library Extension Service in Palmerston North. Reference has been made elsewhere to the use of 16 mm. films at the Feilding Community Centre. The recent development of the Government Film Studio in Wellington has done something to provide good scenic and documentary films, and the formation of a National Film Library has made available to schools and educational groups a wide selection of instructional and informative sub-standard films. The possibilities of both these developments are immense. For it may some day be possible for New Zealanders to learn through films something of life in their

own country, a topic which the commercial cinema, through force of circumstances, almost entirely ignores.

ART SOCIETIES AND ART GALLERIES

Associations concerned mainly with writing, graphic art, music, and drama have nearly always a dual purpose—encouragement of the artist in his chosen medium, and provision of entertainment or enjoyment for an interested public. Both these purposes have their place in adult education, though the preservation of balance between the two is a difficult matter. Art galleries and societies for encouraging graphic art exist in many of the larger centres of population, but with a few notable exceptions their work has been confined (so far as the larger public is concerned) to exhibitions and occasional lectures. A few experiments have been made in art appreciation in connection with loan exhibitions of original work and selected groups of prints of notable pictures. The distribution of prints through the National Gallery does not appear to have advanced beyond the experimental stage; but for this the war may be partly responsible.

One is aware of the difference of opinion that exists among artists as to the value of 'art appreciation' as a subject. Some have held that the only approach to art is through performance; by drawing or painting, it is argued, one comes to an appreciation of the real meaning of art. Others have considered that, in a world where so much that is bad or insincere exists on every hand, an effort should be made to improve public taste by interpreting the artist's work to a wider public. The problem is very real in this country; for the number of wealthy patrons of art is severely limited and unlikely to be increased.

But though the problem is real, the solution is far from simple. There is a sense in which to attempt to develop an appreciation of art in a community that has little artistic

conscience is simply to fight a losing battle. And the standard of public taste is not high: witness the puritanical objections to representations of the nude, or the façade of almost any main street in a larger town.⁷ A student of æsthetics has been known to remark that, in comparison with the shop window, the æsthetic value of an art gallery is negligible. Indeed, it might well be argued that the practice of segregating works of art in buildings specially set apart for the purpose belongs to an unenlightened age. Art, if it is to have any real significance, must permeate the whole life of the community; and it cannot do so if pictures and pieces of statuary are thought of as properly belonging only in the halls of an art gallery; still less if the objects commonly seen and handled, the vessels used, or the buildings inhabited, are shoddy and ill-designed. The significance of this has been well set out by Mumford⁸:

This daily education of the senses is the elemental groundwork of all higher forms of education: when it exists in daily life, a community may spare itself the burden of arranging courses in art appreciation. Where such an environment is lacking, even the purely rational and signfic processes are half-starved: verbal mastery cannot make up for sensory malnutrition. . . . To starve the eye, the ear, the skin, is just as much to court death as to withhold food from the stomach. . . .

‘When it exists’—but it does not exist, and art appreciation may be necessary for a long time to come. The form that it should take is another matter. While there is a kind of pseudo-appreciation that comes from casual attendance at lectures of the ‘art made easy’ variety, there is a legitimate place in adult education for talks about art, particularly as a supplement to the actual experience of attempted artistic expression. It is unfortunate (though perhaps inevitable) that so many artists become almost inarticulate when they attempt to interpret the artist to the public.

⁷ Severe critics of the artistic development of New Zealand forget the immense amount of effort that goes into the planning and beautifying of private gardens. In some towns, too, there has been a real community effort towards beautification.

⁸ Mumford, Lewis. *The Culture of Cities*, 51. London 1940.

From another point of view, too, the position of art galleries in the scheme of adult education is the subject of a sharp division of opinion: Should they concentrate on accumulating examples of the work of artists of international repute, or should they give more attention to housing the works of local painters? One need not be a philistine to suggest that the benefit likely to come from following the former course might not be so great as that derived from a first-class collection of prints, acquired on a national basis; these, however inadequately, would do much to provide a knowledge of the background or 'geography' of art, and might prove of more value to the community at large (and possibly even to art students) than the few originals by acknowledged masters that the limited funds at present available would be likely to provide. So far as works by local painters are concerned, the scheme of hiring works to subscribers with right of purchase after a limited time appears to have met with some success where it has been tried by art societies. The future may perhaps provide some plan whereby such works, owned by the community, could be placed on loan in public buildings. They would then have, as it were, a natural setting, and would be seen by many more people than frequent the halls of art galleries. At present there is a danger that the artist may work to produce a painting that will appeal in a gallery—an orientation of his talents that serves to perpetuate rather than break down the isolation of art.

Opportunities are all too seldom provided in the community for the adult who, without previous training, desires to experience the joy of creative achievement. Art schools exist in the main centres, and classes are offered by many of the technical high schools, but these are not entirely what is required. Some encouraging experiments have been made by the WEA in an endeavour to initiate people into the elementary principles of form, design, and colour, through

practical classes, and the Feilding Community Centre has endeavoured to apply similar principles to both drama and art classes.

MUSICAL SOCIETIES

Societies for the encouragement of performance in music have been numerous since the earliest days of the colony. Choral societies, in particular, are usually to be found in the lists of cultural associations compiled in the main settlements during the first twenty years of their existence. During the last fifteen or sixteen years many choral and orchestral societies appear to have drifted into a backwater. For this the war is not wholly responsible. With a few exceptions, they have too often failed to recruit new members⁹ or to pursue a vigorous and progressive policy. The lack of opportunity for adolescents to continue the work commenced in the schools may be partly to blame. Orchestral societies, of course, have suffered by comparison with the immense quantity of first-class recorded music available for the owner of a gramophone or a radio set, though a judicious selection of programmes on the part of the societies might have prevented some of the deterioration in their fortunes. Too many orchestras have lived in the past or gone after the will-'o-the-wisp of 'popularity', playing isolated movements from symphonies and introducing 'novelties' that have little significance to the serious lover of music. Choral societies have often shown a similar lack of imagination. The orchestra of the National Broadcasting Service, though affected by the war, has at times reached a high level of performance, and the NBS string quartet has justly earned warm praise; but the standard of performances provided by the orchestras of the national stations outside of Wellington has been lamentably low.

⁹ The asterisks denoting forty years' service printed against the names of choral society members during the Centennial Music Festival have been described by one musician as the 'in memoriam notices of these societies'.

Those types of music which demand for their enjoyment an intimate atmosphere and subtle *rapprochement* between performers and audience have, to judge from a few successful experiments, suffered less through comparison with recordings. Chamber music and the performance of unrecorded or little-known works of major composers will still attract audiences, and interest in these types of music has recently been revived in New Zealand. An Auckland venture of some importance has been the arrangement of weekly lunch-hour recitals of chamber music. For more than two years attendances at these recitals have taxed to the utmost the seating capacity of the studio in which they are held. Similar schemes in Wellington and Dunedin are reported to be successful. In recent years, too, there have grown up, both in the main centres and in smaller towns, groups devoted to the encouragement of individual performance before a critical audience.¹⁰ Some of these have done much to raise the level of musical taste among a limited portion of the community; but their main purpose has been the encouragement of local talent.

In the broader field of musical appreciation a few valuable experiments have been made by stations (and particularly by minor stations) of the NBS. What has been lacking has been any serious attempt to follow up such programmes with pamphlets or articles designed to assist the listener. There is no recognized channel of communication between listener and programme organizer, and no necessary connection between talks on music and the programmes to be presented during the following week. Here, as elsewhere, the NBS has done more for the schools than for adult education. Apart from the radio, the most significant work has probably been done through the use of recordings from the Carnegie music sets. The regular recitals arranged in Auckland and other centres have done something to make

¹⁰ Six such groups existed in Auckland alone, with an estimated combined membership of between four and five hundred. Branches of the British Music Society have been active in the Wellington district for some years.

up for the lack of opportunity to hear flesh and blood performance.

Local bodies have not recently done much to encourage music. Organ recitals have been arranged intermittently and bands have been subsidized.¹¹ It is probable that the rôle of patron will eventually have to be assumed by the NBS, as the only body with funds sufficiently large to provide the more expensive forms of musical performance. Something has already been done, both in connection with the Centennial Music Festival in 1940 and through the arrangement of concerts in military camps. Working in collaboration with AEWS, the Broadcasting Service has sent string quartets and concert parties, sometimes composed of performers of considerable talent, to many isolated camps, where they have demonstrated the acceptability of good music to groups previously inexperienced in serious listening. Army education, too, has made extensive use of the library of gramophone records belonging to the NBS. Experimental though these efforts have been, there is reason to hope that smaller communities may be served by a similar scheme after the war. There would seem to be no reason why the library of musical scores controlled by the NBS and lent to groups organized by AEWS should not be made available to civilian choral, operatic, and orchestral societies. After the war, too, the practice of arranging concerts by overseas performers engaged to broadcast from the national stations will doubtless be resumed.¹²

The patronage of any body constituted on the lines of the NBS is not without its dangers. If the recruitment of a national orchestra means the drawing off of talent from the local communities, without a corresponding assumption

¹¹ The city councils of the four main centres co-operated in making arrangements for the Centennial Music Festival. A recent development has been the provision of regular Sunday evening entertainments by the city of Palmerston North.

¹² The possibility of setting up some organization similar to the Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA), which has done much to keep music alive in England during the war, is worthy of serious consideration.

of responsibility by the central body, the scheme may defeat one of its main objects. Two other problems also arise. One is the problem of providing a livelihood for talented composers, who, unless they are skilled performers, would find great difficulty in existing in this country; another is the degree to which patronage should be extended. Should the NBS in peace-time go to the length of assisting to pay for the instruction of music students as it has done during the war? Both these problems have an indirect bearing on adult education.

There are indications of a new interest in music in secondary schools, which may gradually produce an improvement in the musical standard of the adult community. If the work of the schools is to be really effective, however, facilities in the field of adult education will require simultaneous extension.

DRAMATIC SOCIETIES

Reference has already been made to the development of drama during the last twenty years. The British Drama League and the Auckland Drama Council have between them served to co-ordinate or stimulate some 660 drama groups scattered up and down the country. Founded in 1931, largely owing to the pioneering work of Miss Elizabeth Blake, the British Drama League has for its object the encouragement of the art of the theatre 'both for its own sake and as a means of intelligent recreation among the whole community', through stimulating the formation of drama groups, providing a library of plays, holding festivals of community drama, encouraging the writing of plays, and conducting schools of drama for amateur producers and actors. In the years immediately preceding 1939 it had a vigorous life, though its financial position was never very secure. For some years the League employed a drama tutor who, in addition to conducting schools, lectures, and

rehearsals, acted as adjudicator at competitive festivals. The library of plays available for loan to member groups was a valuable asset built up partly out of Carnegie funds. The Auckland Drama Council was formed because of certain differences regarding the membership clauses of the League's constitution and the competitive nature of the festivals organized by the League. Until it went into recess shortly after the outbreak of war, one of its main functions was to provide affiliated groups with confidential and authoritative criticism of productions.

Most dramatic societies have felt the effect of the war, but a surprising number have managed to carry on at least a limited programme. Some have reported a considerable increase of membership. There is a serious lack of suitable theatres for repertory work¹³, but one or two halls have been successfully converted for this purpose. A notable example is the WEA theatre in Auckland. Among the most significant experiments in drama have been the development of the Christchurch Repertory and the ACE drama scheme (both of which owe much to Shelley), the foundation of the Auckland School of Drama, the more recent use of the drama by the Community Centre in Feilding, the work of the Unity Theatre in Wellington, and the revival of puppetry by the Elam School of Art. A scheme for the foundation of a Group Theatre in New Zealand has recently been discussed, but it is yet too soon to say whether it is likely to find real expression in action.

The NBS has devoted much of its energies to the production of plays for broadcasting. Some of these have achieved a high technical standard, and the policy of the NBS has provided some encouragement to local writers. At the same time, radio plays can never be an adequate substi-

¹³ The specially designed stages that have been provided by enlightened LEAs in England have done much to encourage local community drama. With a few exceptions schools in New Zealand lack such facilities, and those that are more fortunate do not as a rule make their facilities readily available to repertory societies.

tute for the theatre in the cultural life of the community, nor can the radio provide that satisfaction which comes to both actor and producer in the process of translating the author's words into a vivid experience shared by a living audience.

In drama, as in everything else in adult education, the quality of the material offered is important. Societies that simply set out to produce plays irrespective of their significance too frequently end by following the dictates of the box office, and become involved in the problems that beset the commercial stage. There is a tendency, too, for the amateur who takes to drama to regard himself as a star performer and the play as a vehicle for his talents. Along that road lies disaster. What are needed more than anything else in this country are skilled producers with feeling for the drama as an art, and theatres where plays can be produced without imperilling the finances of the societies undertaking production. A national theatre would also do much to restore the drama to its rightful place in the community, and might give scope to local writers, some of whom have proved themselves to have talent above the average.

GROUPS WITH RELIGIOUS AFFILIATIONS

Associations with some religious affiliation play an important part in adult education, though few have really set themselves this task as a major objective. The YWCA, and to a less extent the YMCA, spread their net fairly widely so as to cover not only recreational and physical activities, but hobby classes, discussion groups, craft groups, and groups organized for the study of specific 'subjects'. The Associations are important not only because they provide a home for many clubs of a quasi-educational kind, but because they have been pioneers in catering for that all-too-often neglected period of later adolescence. Their permanence, too, gives them a continuity of effort often lacking in the work of other organizations. The educational

work of the Associations varies in quality, but at its best (and particularly with the YWCA) it has the advantage of being in the hands of trained organizers with a special knowledge of the social needs of adolescents. As 'consumer groups', too, they are of the first importance, their combined membership running into many thousands. The religious character of the Associations, though from one point of view giving a sense of wholeness to their efforts, at times prevents them from reaching those most in need of assistance. They have not developed educational work among older groups to the extent that similar Associations in other countries have done, nor have they ventured (as in the USA) into the field of vocational education.

The general educational work carried on directly by the churches lacks co-ordination. On the whole the churches provide more effectively for adolescents than for adults, though even in the youth work there is much more to be desired. The Catholic Church has, among other associations, branches of the Catholic Social Guild devoting attention to social and international problems, and using material prepared by the parent association in England. The Church of England, through the Church of England Men's Society, does some interesting work and has encouraged discussion of current problems, but it has not developed any comprehensive organization similar to the Church Tutorial Classes Association or the Association for Adult Religious Education which operate in England. The Methodist Church, which has perhaps specialized in work among youth rather than adults, has a national organization with an office in Wellington. Some discussion has taken place within the Presbyterian Church concerning the development of a comprehensive adult educational scheme, but little concrete result has been evident. If these examples may be taken as typical, it would seem that the churches have on the whole failed to appreciate the significance of what has in some countries become a major part of church work. It is not yet possible

to use of New Zealand churches the words of a recent American writer:

Were a man of ancient or medieval times to saunter through the modern city church or synagogue, as I have had occasion to do in recent months, he would be bewildered beyond understanding. Doors! Many of them, opening into rooms filled with busy people—busy with listening, learning, or just doing things.¹⁴

Nor have many of the churches apparently realized the unique position that they occupy for the training of adults for marriage, parenthood, and citizenship. Buildings are not always inadequate. There are examples of fine halls which, under the direction of someone with a little imagination, might readily be transformed into centres of community life; but all too often they are little used.

The League of Mothers (undenominational) and the Mothers' Union (Anglican) have in some centres reached out for assistance in dealing with wider problems, and have provided opportunities similar to those provided by the Women's Institutes and Women's Divisions. The very large membership which such bodies possess makes them important potential 'consumer groups' for adult education, and they have sometimes welcomed the assistance of organizations like the ACE.

Criticisms offered of the work of the churches would be unjust if unqualified.¹⁵ There are examples of very interesting attempts to use discussion methods, films, and other aids in a general educational programme. Public affairs committees of some denominations have organized discussions of questions of the day. But the fact that these experiments are so remarkable is itself evidence of the general absence of work of this kind. There is, of course, a division of opinion as to the extent to which the church should concern itself with these matters. On the one hand there are those who hold that the church is a part of community and, 'unless it

¹⁴ Meland, Bernard E. *The Church and Adult Education*. New York 1939.

¹⁵ One church recently, in selecting a new minister, took special account of his knowledge of and interest in adult education.

is leading the community in the things people are intent upon doing, its doors will close'. On the other hand the more conservative among churchmen would maintain that the church is not a club, but a place of worship 'and, if this is forgotten, the church is lost. It may as well close its doors'. The solution of this problem is a matter for each individual church; or perhaps ultimately for history to discover. It is interesting to speculate, however, on the peace-time effect of some of the emergency measures that have been adopted to provide for the recreation of the armed forces, and some of the more effective attempts to meet the problem of wayward youth by providing facilities for the healthy use of leisure. The church as an association in community can scarcely hope to come out of the present war unaffected by changes in social outlook. Even if individual churches¹⁶ cannot in city areas provide opportunities for the creative use of leisure, they may, by their combined effort, do something to see that such opportunities are provided. There have been a few indications of a willingness to co-operate in face of present social problems; that at least may augur well for the future.

LEARNED SOCIETIES

In the larger New Zealand communities there is a group of agencies which, for want of a better term may be called 'learned societies'. Of these there are two classes—those that have severe technical restrictions on membership, and those open more generally to persons professing an interest in certain fields of study. Among the former are to be found such organizations as the New Zealand Institute of Chemistry, the Law Society, and the New Zealand Institution of Engineers. These are so specialized as scarcely to

¹⁶ The immense number of denominations contributes to the difficulty at present. Some 34 different denominations in Auckland and some 26 in Wellington advertise regularly in the press; there are probably others as well. Even in Somerset's 'Littledene' with its 1800 inhabitants there were ten different denominations.

touch the field of general adult education. In the latter class fall the many societies functioning with various degrees of success to encourage the layman in his pursuit of knowledge. Examples are the New Zealand Institute of International Affairs; the Economics Society of Australia and New Zealand; the Australasian Association of Psychology and Philosophy; together with numerous historical, astronomical, botanical, and literary societies. Many of these do not seek very actively to extend their membership, but nevertheless perform, within their limited sphere, significant educational work. Perhaps the most important are the various branches and sections of the Royal Society of New Zealand, the beginnings of which have been noted in a previous chapter. The various branches affiliated to the Royal Society offer public lectures on a wide variety of topics connected with science and the arts, and specialized lectures for members of the separate sections. The select libraries of the branches, though varying in scope, provide material for research and reading by the serious student. No doubt many people have derived benefit from the demonstrations, lectures, and showings of educational films that certain branches have offered; but such work is naturally lacking in continuity and runs the risk of becoming merely cheap entertainment for the lecture addict.

WOMEN'S SOCIAL GROUPS

The very numerous groups catering specially for women make up a large part of the social background in the larger communities. Their range extends all the way from pressure groups, through associations for serious investigation, to social clubs. Educationally their importance is not easy to determine. It would be merely priggish to reproach any of them for being mainly opportunities for sociability; for social clubs are needed in communities where 'days at home' have gone out of fashion, and where an occasional afternoon

or evening away from home may result in fuller development of personality and, one may be pardoned for adding, the more efficient running of a home. Heaven forbid that adult education should be regarded as a solemn virtue, compared with which relaxation or idleness is a vice! It would be foolish to neglect the many services rendered to the community by women's organizations.¹⁷ Indeed there is a kind of organization that women accomplish more effectively than men; they are more persistent, and less easily discouraged than men, and, given able leadership, can accomplish wonders. Nor is it unusual for a lecturer to encounter in associations composed entirely of women eager and critical minds that amply repay him for the labour of preparation. At the same time much of the activity of even professedly educational clubs is directed to the provision of entertainment, and the search for 'an exciting lecturer' regardless of subject appears to be a common quest. The guest lecturer, as he resumes his seat, too often feels that the net result of his efforts has been that the members are now able to enjoy their tea and cakes the better 'for the satisfying feeling that their duty has been done'.

MISCELLANEOUS

To the groups already mentioned must be added a heterogeneous collection of associations with at least professedly educational aims. A comparative new-comer is the New Education Fellowship, an organization with active branches in seven cities and towns and a total membership of about 400. While problems of relating school and home and a serious examination of educational aims and methods form the basis of the work of the NEF, its activities have covered a much wider range. Valuable use has been made of

¹⁷ The Women's Food Value League, the National Council of Women, and the Plunket Society, are only typical of associations that have performed very valuable service to the community.

discussion methods and radio technique, while a healthy amount of investigation has been carried out.

There are, in the larger towns, such groups as Fabian Clubs; Returned Services' Associations; Rationalist Societies; parent-teacher associations; a few co-operative guilds; semi-political associations of one kind and another; Rotary Clubs¹⁸; Manufacturers' Associations, Chambers of Commerce, Junior Chambers of Commerce, and other businessmen's groups—all of which probably provide stimulation to thought, sometimes through organized discussion, but more often by lectures or luncheon talks.

With more direct purpose, but often with similar technique, such bodies as the League of Nations Union and the Howard League for Penal Reform, within a prescribed field, do something to promote discussion of social problems. The League of Nations Union has done some valuable work through lectures, informal luncheon discussions, and the publishing of discussion material—some of it of a high standard—and has continued its existence despite the setback it received in the years immediately preceding the war.

Auckland possesses an association of about 200 members, the People's University, conducting lectures on Sunday afternoons and having as one of its aims the establishment of residential colleges. It has links with the Henry George school of economics. Up to the present no active steps appear to have been taken to found a permanent adult college.

Briefly, and with danger of doing injustice to some of the groups, it may be said that they suffer educationally from inbreeding. All too often, discussion, when permitted, takes the form of a weekly repetition of the listener's panacea for the world's ills irrespective of appositeness to the material discussed, and the experienced lecturer, noting the same

¹⁸ Some of these associations have given most valuable service to the community in sponsoring educational projects. The Rotary Club's assistance to the Crippled Children Society is a case in point. The Manufacturers' Associations have recently developed schemes for training executives.

faces at each of his annual appearances, can give a fairly accurate forecast of what many of his audience will say when discussion time comes round. The currency reformers, the extreme left-wingers, the woolly idealists, and the inveterate espousers of new causes, are too often in search of an opportunity to deliver themselves of their own prepared speeches to be desirous or capable of being shaken by what a lecturer has to say. There is no use blinking the fact that there are people for whom lecture-going is a habit acquired by some mischance in early youth and continued in later life for no apparent reason. In America they would be catered for by the commercial Lyceums and Chautauquas. In this country they have, from necessity, simpler and less expensive pleasures. One does not forget the serious thirty to fifty per cent who want to discover new approaches to problems. But all too often such groups provide entertainment designed to add a sauce of somewhat unpleasant smugness to the luncheon, afternoon tea, or supper. There are pleasing exceptions, notably among groups of younger people, whose keenness and resistance to sloppy thinking have a tonic effect on both lecturer and hearers. But the older groups show so much overlapping of membership that one has sympathy with a lecturer who spent a year on exchange in this country, and who, having to address three similar groups in one week, became uneasy on looking at his third audience. It occurred to him that Mr. Dunne might have been making one of his experiments with time. Frantically searching his pocket he discovered three sets of notes. 'Which club is this?' he inquired of his chairman. 'The . . . Society', was the reply. 'Thank Heaven for that,' he murmured as he commenced to speak to the old familiar faces.

POLITICAL GROUPS

Political groups have so far received scant mention. For this there is the very good reason that inquiry has failed

to reveal any considerable adult educational programme within party organizations, with the possible exception of the Communist Party. The most effective effort at study of political problems in recent years took place in the Left Book Club groups, some twenty-two of which flourished in various parts of the Dominion in the years before the war. Some, of course, would dismiss as propaganda much of what these groups did. That would be inaccurate, for much serious inquiry took place in the best of such associations, and there was a healthy difference of opinion in some of them. Apart from a few sporadic efforts to 'catch them young', the two main political parties have on the whole a poor educational record. On the analogy of other countries one might have expected the Labour Party to have provided some encouragement to the study of principles behind recent legislation. The actual achievement in this direction has been negligible. Organized industrial labour, with a membership of over 200,000 in more than 400 unions, has on the whole an equally poor record. Particularly since the extension of compulsory unionism, older unionists have at times realized the importance of instructing new members in the principles of unionism; but their efforts have produced little tangible result.

It must, of course, be remembered that something has been done to explain the aims of organized labour through the various trade union journals. An examination of some eight of these indicates that they vary a good deal in quality. Much of their space is naturally devoted to routine union affairs, but one or two attempt to deal at some length with international affairs, and at least one devotes a fair amount of space to discussion of trade processes. The best of them are at least capable of becoming important in adult education. The most significant publication of this class is the New Zealand Federation of Labour's *Research Bulletin*, upwards of one thousand copies of which are distributed through the Trades Councils. This publication shows a

scientific approach to national and international problems that sets a very high standard.

On the fringe of the field of political education there have been a few active Plebs League groups, mainly concerned with a Marxian interpretation of economics and social change. The missionary zeal of the Douglas Credit movement has resulted in an indeterminate number of converts. Co-operative societies, on the Rochdale model, exist in some districts, but except in some of the guilds formed in connection with them, their educational work is not remarkable.

THE PLUNKET SOCIETY

The Royal New Zealand Society for the Health of Women and Children, more usually known (because of the name of its first patron) as the Plunket Society, was founded in the early years of the present century by the late Sir Frederick Truby King. Its work has expanded until at the present time it supervises more than sixty per cent of the Dominion's babies. The fact that Plunket Nurses and the Karitane Nurses (trained to care for young children during the mother's convalescence after the birth of the child) enter so many homes, and give advice to so many mothers who visit the pre-natal and post-natal clinics, makes the Society one of the most important agencies for infant and parent education. The work of the Society has recently been extended to include the pre-school child by the establishment of advisory clinics. There are grounds for believing that the staffs of the various branches of the Society, too, are becoming increasingly aware of the psychological aspects of their work. The Plunket Society has a unique opportunity to provide education for the right people at the right time.

COUNTRY GROUPS

In country areas, apart from the very important women's organizations already mentioned, perhaps the most signifi-

cant associations are the Young Farmers' Clubs organized by the Department of Agriculture. They have been affected both directly and indirectly by the war, but had in 1939 a membership of about 3,000. In addition to the specialized study of agricultural problems, which has produced some fine results, they have provided valuable experience in public speaking, debating, and the conduct of meetings. But their efforts in the broader field of general education have been less noteworthy, and one might wish that those guiding their destiny could see something of what is done in the Folk High Schools or Smallholders' Schools of Denmark by way of contrast. Curiously enough, there appears to be no organization for country girls comparable with the YFCs.

The Farmers' Unions vary in character and outlook from one part of New Zealand to another: in some sheep-farming districts, where larger holdings are common, they tend to be dominated by wealthier farmers; where dairy-farming predominates, their membership has a different colour. Some of the dairy-farmers have shown a disposition to take more kindly to overtures made by adult educational agencies. But on the whole men in rural areas have evinced less interest in adult education than have their womenfolk. There is no male equivalent of the Women's Institutes and Women's Divisions. Surprisingly enough, too, the principle of co-operation, as the Danes understand the term, has not been a marked feature of New Zealand rural life.

Such, then, are some of the 'temptations to a fuller life' that make up the borderland of adult education. The overall picture is what one might expect in a community that has not been planned, that has passed fairly rapidly out of the pioneering world of isolation into the Great Society, that has outgrown the intimate bonds of neighbourhood and has not yet developed new institutions to give shape or unity to social life. It is probably typical, also, of a country in which adult education (like primary education a century ago) is

still only emerging from the era of charity. It is a picture of unrelated efforts, apparently attractive to older people but all too often neglecting those of adolescent age. It is a strange mixture of nationally-provided services, local upthrusts, and commercial enterprise.

The cumulative effect of these borderland agencies cannot be described with accuracy—it will be different in different communities, and in different sections of the same community. But for a large part of the population the effect, for good or ill, is much greater than that exercised by the formal agencies of adult education; that at least can be said without fear of contradiction. Then, too, only a rough estimate can be made of the differing significance of these agencies in urban and rural communities, since clear-cut distinctions between urban and rural are not possible. Some remote settlements are very self-conscious communities with their social life centred in the Women's Institute, or the Women's Division, the Plunket Society, or the Returned Services' Association, the school, or the Farmers' Union, almost any one of which is capable of being a co-ordinating force. In other areas the main social centre is, in the words of a disillusioned school teacher, 'the picture theatre in the nearest larger town'. Somerset has given a lively analysis of the multitudinous associations existing in a South Island district of about 1,800 inhabitants. Comparing his Littledene with a city community he concludes:¹⁹

By comparison the country is starved of educational opportunity, but it more than makes up for this deficiency in community solidarity. Its social life may have little direction; it may be dissipated in the service of unworthy aims; but underlying it all are the forces that are the educator's opportunity.

But Littledene is not to be taken as typical of all rural areas; it is too mature, too settled, to represent some of the North Island districts. Doig, in a study of some 500 dairy-farmers

¹⁹ Somerset, H. C. D., *Littledene*, 98. Wellington 1938.

and their families in twelve districts, found a different picture:²⁰

The majority of dairy-farmers belonged to at least one organization, only 16 per cent recording that they belonged to none at all; 25 per cent belonged to one organization only; 22 per cent to two, 18 per cent to three, 10 per cent to four, 5 per cent to five, and 4 per cent to more than five organizations.

Of the organizations represented, the Farmers' Union, lodges, automobile associations, stock clubs, Returned Services' Association, and sports clubs were in order the commonest. (Only 1 per cent claimed membership of the WEA.)

Farmers' wives questioned in the same survey showed some interesting contrasts:

A much higher percentage (49 per cent) of wives than men did not belong to any organization; 34 per cent of the wives belonged to one organization, 13 per cent to two, 3 per cent to three, 1 per cent to four. The analysis of the type of organization to which they belong shows the largest memberships to be in two well-known women's organizations—the Women's Division of the New Zealand Farmers' Union and the New Zealand Women's Institute; the numbers then drop considerably; library membership comes third, sports and games fourth; the Plunket Society and social clubs next, with a very small membership of other societies.

The young people who had left school were also considered separately in Doig's survey:

Sixty per cent of the sons and daughters who had left school did not belong to any organization. Twenty-three per cent were members of one organization, 11 per cent of two, 4 per cent of three, 2 per cent of four. Sports clubs were the most popular in terms of membership, nearly 32 per cent of the children being members. The figures showing membership in other types of organization then drop considerably, the next in order being lodge or friendly society, with 8 per cent of these children as

²⁰ Doig, W. T. *A Survey of Standards of Life of New Zealand Dairy-Farmers*, 63ff. (Bulletin No. 75 of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research.) Wellington 1940.

members, stock clubs (3.7 per cent), the young farmers' clubs (2.9 per cent), and social clubs (2.1 per cent). Only 1.3 per cent of the children left school belonged to a library, and 1.9 per cent to the Workers' Educational Association.

Doig's figures do not, of course, give a picture of the small country towns in dairying districts, and no survey of such populations is known to exist. Observations made by adult tutors in such areas (in the years immediately before the war) conjure up a picture of three fairly active 'educational' associations—a Women's Division, a Women's Institute, and one other group (either a WEA group or some other form of discussion group). But generalization, except in the broadest terms, would be dangerous. It is, however, probably true to say that there are a few people active in many things, and a considerable number nominally attached to several groups, but for the most part untouched by groups with even an indirect educational effect. Sociological research in these matters is urgently needed, and may not bear out the statement that has been made.

In the larger towns and cities the situation is quite different. Here one finds a vast array of agencies of the kind described in this chapter, offering temptations to a relatively small section, and a few major organizations providing classes and short courses of lectures for a still smaller number. Indeed, one of the problems of adult education is to bring cohesion out of dissipation. This is a different thing from regimenting all men into the same organizations; it is different from setting up yet another agency to compete with those already existing. Up to a point the development of specific associations is a healthy sign of life in a community. Beyond that point it may be symptomatic of a failure to realize common needs and common purposes, and may lead to a loss of social efficiency by so organizing the members of a small part of the community that, in the hurly-burly of committees and meetings, they may have little time to ask what all the fuss is about: in such circum-

stances the great mass of men remain untouched. Men combine to achieve the most important or the most trivial of ends. They link up with associations not always to satisfy needs acutely felt; more often their motives are vague and undefined—they are at the stage of discontent, lacking they know not what. Opportunities for group membership, like those for commercialized leisure, have in modern society to be seized with discrimination. How to develop that discrimination is the unanswered question.

To find his way about this amazingly complex social structure the adult needs some help, some counsel, that will enable him to get his bearings and find his place in society. At the same time a comprehensible community needs a focal point. It may well be that the community centre may prove to be the missing institution. Be that as it may, the problem of adult education is, in the immediate future, one of servicing those groups that are making for a better quality of life, and at the same time of supplying needs not at present met. The solution of this problem cannot be found simply by providing more agencies; nor by devising some detailed blue-print that will enable stock services to be provided in any community irrespective of its structure. And the structure of any community is to be determined only by close, careful, and continued observation made by a trained observer on the spot.

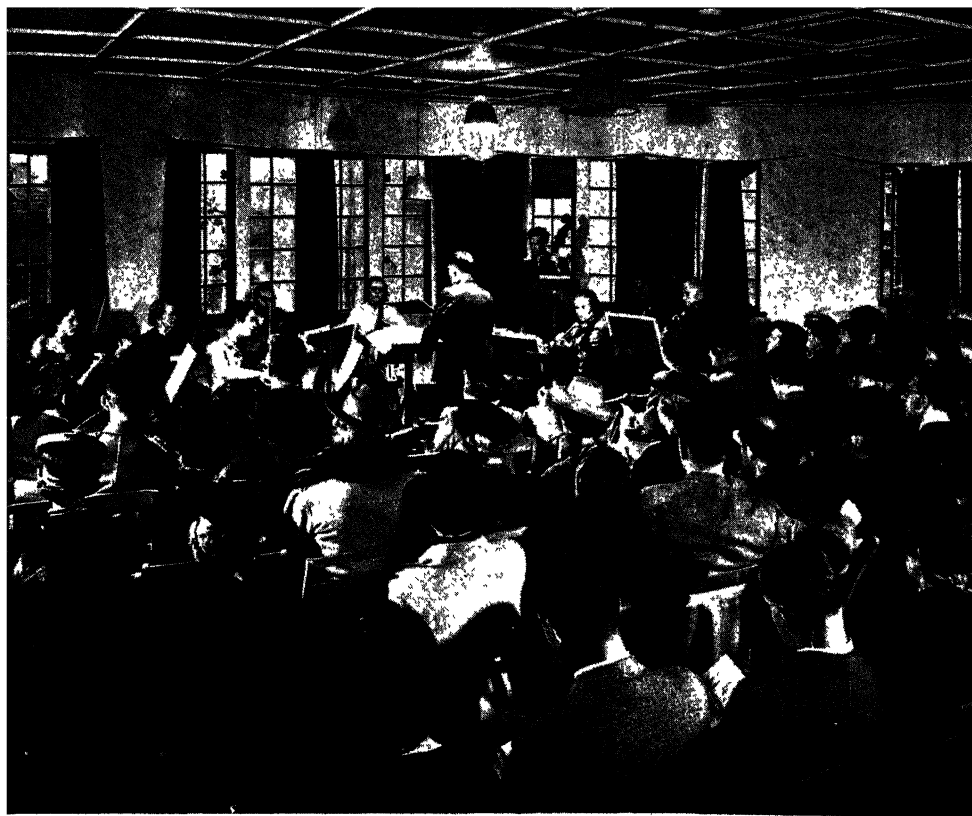
PART THREE: THE FUTURE

'We work to live; and all we know as the production of material wealth is but ancillary to the æsthetic and the spiritual life. It is indeed only the adult who can realize this, and know for sure that work in the economic sense is an evil the dimensions of which we should aim continuously to reduce.'

F. H. SPENCER, *Education for the People*.

'Study is much (at any rate to one who has been a student all his days); but there are other and broader and more vital things than study. One must know in order to live; but life is greater than knowledge. And a good Community Centre is the place of a good common life.'

ERNEST BARKER, 'Community Centres and the Use of Leisure',
Adult Education, September 1938.



LUNCH-HOUR RECITAL OF CHAMBER MUSIC

CHAPTER X

The End in View

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THE study of a century of adult education would be of little value if it were merely antiquarian, concerned only with a statement of what has or has not been done. Out of the broken series of community efforts that have been described there should emerge some principles capable of guiding future development. This and the two following chapters attempt to set out those principles and to indicate ways in which they may be translated into practice. In speaking of principles one is not, of course, thinking of a cut-and-dried philosophy to be enforced from above. To impose a set of values in this way would be repugnant to the whole tradition of adult education at its best. On the other hand, unless those members of the community more directly concerned with adult education are agreed, at least to some extent, on why organized adult education is desirable at all, on what its general aims and character should be, and on the place it should take in the whole educational scheme, their efforts must be confused and lacking in direction. This chapter, then, is concerned with such broad principles.

At the outset adult education was described in borrowed words: 'all the deliberate efforts by which men and women attempt to satisfy their thirst for knowledge, to equip them-

selves for their responsibilities as citizens and members of society and to find opportunities for self-expression.' Even this broad definition has failed to comprehend all that has been included in the present survey. Failure to keep within the terms of such a definition has not been the result of perversity: it has been inevitable, because the concept of adult education is itself changing. In the first place, the whole of adult education, as we know it today, cannot be called deliberate or intentional in the sense of 'chosen after careful thought'. Only a small minority of men and women arrive intentionally at a decision to add a cubit to their mental stature. The majority stumble on activities, discovering, as it were by accident, while they pursue their new-found interests, that the business of living becomes fraught with more meaning. A very large part of adult education is deliberate only in the sense that it is the action of free men capable of employing limited time and effort in alternative lines of conduct. Again, most men learn something of their duties as citizens not by deliberate choice, but by the much less deliberate process of informal discussion, or from the opportunities for accepting responsibility that come their way in day-to-day intercourse with their fellows. In the same way, 'opportunities for self-expression' are found more frequently by accident than by deliberate choice. It must never be forgotten that a large amount of adult education takes place in conversation with one's neighbours, in reading by one's own fireside, in pursuing one's hobby. The cabbage-patch, the hearth, the cinema, the street, and the tramcar may all in one sense be educational.

Education of this unordered kind has always been a function of community: it is as inescapable as the air men breathe, or the language they speak. Its significance scarcely occurred to a community less rapidly changing than our own, where the unaltered, seemingly unalterable pattern of social life was comprehensible. There was little need to speak of it; still less to reduce it to a system; it could be left to do

its work. Even today it is vastly more important, in the long run, than the more formal, deliberately provided education. In the recent past the importance of this 'background' education that adults receive in the process of social living has been obscured by the attention paid to that relatively small part of adult education which, resembling the formal instruction of school and university, has proved amenable to organization. Too often adult education has been narrowly identified with book-learning and with class-instruction. Today the increasing needs that arise from the more complex society compel attention to this 'background'; we are forced, in other words, to place adult education in its social setting, and to enlarge its province so as to bring into focus more and more of this background. And it is at this point that a new problem, perhaps the greatest single problem of education, reveals itself. For, in the long view, the half-planned society in which men live in the twentieth century may not provide that intimate sense of community which formerly existed, and which gave meaning to the individual life; and the social forces shaping man—forces that formerly were educative—may threaten his personality with disintegration. The background education of the adult cannot in such circumstances be left to chance or taken for granted; more and more it becomes a necessary function of the organized community to ensure an educative background by a process of social planning.

There is a parallel between the history of adult education and the history of the education of children that points to the existence of the same problem. A little more than a century ago the common school was a place in which, as a social necessity, the rudiments of the three Rs were somewhat reluctantly imparted to the masses. In the course of time new duties have been thrust upon it. Today the school is called upon to provide for all, as of right, the rudiments of most things, and, above all, the rudiments of the good life. In much the same way men and women have in the past

sought formal adult education for various reasons: to acquire literacy, to understand the principles behind their occupations, to obtain advancement in their employment, to acquire a few crumbs of culture, to achieve political power, to find opportunities for self-expression. Many of these aims remain important; but inevitably and increasingly adult education is coming to mean the provision of the conditions that make possible that good life for which the schools are preparing. Dewey has somewhere emphasized the importance of this change when he defines education as 'the enterprise of supplying the conditions which ensure growth, or adequacy of life, irrespective of age'.

The adoption of this larger view makes the sectional approach to the problem of adult education seem petty and unsatisfactory. To speak of workers' education, or women's education, is useful only in so far as it suggests special techniques that may enable the needs of adults to be satisfied. In the end adult education means not the education of a particular group or of a particular class, but education of men and women, who differ from children mainly by virtue of age, the reality of problems that confront them, the greater degree of responsibility that they owe to the community, and, most of all, by the fact that, in matters educational, they are no longer subject to compulsion. Adult education, that is, has to prove its value to individuals who have a right of choice. It amounts to placing in the way of adults temptations to a fuller life.

The changing nature of adult education is implied in much of the history of the movement in this country. It is implied in the expanding work of the WEA, in the revealed demand in an even wider field, and in the hundreds of informal agencies that the community has thrown up from time to time. What is needed now is a clearer recognition by the organized community of this wider meaning that adult education assumes in the rapidly changing social environment of the twentieth century. For despite the many advan-

tages of life in this country, New Zealand is no more insulated from the effects of the Great Society than it has been free from the influence of the economic trends of the larger world. The words of a recent writer on New Zealand are doubtless true:¹

There can be few countries . . . where the ordinary man has a better chance of making personal contact with those who rule him, or where he can so easily see working out before his eyes the forces that mould him. Neither social barriers, nor obstacles of space, nor—up to the present at least—lack of economic resources for a healthy life, prevent New Zealand from becoming a democracy in actual practice as well as in accepted theory.

It may be added, too, that the opportunities for informal education, through the many practical activities in which the New Zealander is tempted to take part, are very numerous. But even with these allowances, it is also true that the sense of community, which in pioneering days was forced upon men, is as liable to vanish here as elsewhere. Indeed, in the more recently established and more quickly growing aggregations of population, it has never even developed. While we have escaped the worst features of industrialism, and should be wise enough to prevent their development in the future, we have not those stores of indigenous culture that in older countries compensate, however inadequately, for the follies of an industrial age. Nor have we readily available those opportunities for æsthetic experience and 'graceful living' that would give significance to increased hours of leisure. All things considered, the background education is no more healthy here than elsewhere. The need to plan for it is as great.

In any form of community in the present changing world adult education is important. But in a democracy it is more than merely a desirable addition to the existing system of education: it is a necessary condition for the achievement of the democratic life. And to supply it in a

¹ Wood, Frederick L. W. *Understanding New Zealand*. New York 1944.

democracy is in some ways more difficult than to invent a system of propaganda that would enable a dictator of a fascist State to enforce his ideal on a docile population. For democracy is a pattern of social living in which the mechanics of the ballot-box are only incidental. It is a way of life marked by respect for the individual human being and for his right of participation in the common good; it implies a belief in what may be called the 'general common decency' of the ordinary man—a common sense that enables him to weigh matters and to make decisions when issues are fairly presented to him. In such a form of social living it is the right of each to discuss, to exchange ideas with his fellows; it is the complementary duty of each to offer service to the community and at the same time to examine, to probe, and to seek for truth. It implies, in short, the right of the individual to a meaningful existence, and the duty to ensure that a similar right is extended to his fellows. A community based on this concept of life is not necessarily, as some have averred, inept and powerless; it can co-operate for the achievement of ends; but that co-operation is not blind, unquestioning obedience; it is an understanding, willing compliance in the achievement of ends found on examination to be good. Belief in democracy does not imply an obsession with man in the mass to the exclusion of those features of living that add dignity to the human being, but rather a conviction that collective action and collective planning are of value only in so far as they make possible the achievement of what without shame may be called the æsthetic and spiritual life.

If this be a fair description of democracy as an ideal, it is not to be achieved by the simple act of leaving men to work out their own salvation. Without some kind of organized effort 'to find for each individual a fair opportunity to develop his best powers', the very people for whom opportunity does not at present open out—whether from

lack of awareness of what is offering, from inability to make opportunity for themselves, or from the inadequacy of their immediate environment—are left without it. One cannot assume that the job of adult education has been done when a few facilities have been provided, unless at the same time three conditions are assured: (1) that the facilities are in the right place and of the right kind; (2) that they are known and understood by the community for which they are intended; (3) that no man, through accident of residence or work, is needlessly prevented from availing himself of them.

To ensure these three conditions requires much more than the provision of a few adult classes; it requires a new attitude on the part of those charged with the provision of educational facilities—an attitude that may best be called far-sighted. They must think of education as life-long, and broader than mere book-learning and instruction; for, by failing to provide opportunity for development at the end of the recognized period of formal education, the community loses the full effect of what formal education is designed to produce. To provide adult education only for those whose formal schooling has left them ill-prepared for the good life, is to put adult education back into an era of charitable repair-work out of which it should progressively grow. While it is, with some qualifications, unfortunately true of New Zealand as of England, that ‘the process of education for the vast majority of children offers at present an example of “under-exposure, under-development and insufficient fixing”²’, it is also true that the desirable length of formal education cannot be determined without considering at the same time the provision that the community makes for adult life. Adult education will be necessary however long children remain at school, and however well they are trained during their school life. The better their schooling, the greater will

² Board of Education, *Educational Reconstruction* (White Paper). London 1943.

be the demand for adult education; but it will be adult education that is really adult, really concerned with adult needs and problems, and much of it will have nothing to do with classes and formal instruction. In the past, adult education has too often been juvenile education carried on at the adult level, simply because the school had left too many gaps in fundamental knowledge. Even if many of those gaps are closed, adult education will still be required. Encyclopædic knowledge may have been an aim of men in the seventeenth century; today no sane man can expect the school to teach everything. There are some things, as Grundtvig discovered over a hundred years ago, that only the adult can learn; and the world is a busier, more complicated place today than it was a hundred years ago.

Viewed in this way, adult education has always as its prime aim the improvement of the quality of life. This aim is not capable of complete definition once and for all: it has a different significance at each moment of the individual's life; it is a constantly varying but none the less real standard, without which adult education in a democracy has no meaning, no reality, no excuse for existence. In face of it much of the endless argument about the relative merits of the vocational and the cultural, the intellectual and the practical, the serious disciplines and the merely recreational, loses its point. Men are, at any given moment, so constituted (whether by nature or nurture is immaterial) that they achieve satisfaction in different ways. Some will find themselves in activities that for others would be soul-destroying. This is not to admit that all uses of leisure are equally good, or that all kinds of behaviour have the same ethical significance. (Your burglar may achieve some satisfaction in the pursuit of his trade; but one could hardly maintain that his vocation made for improvement in the quality of his life.) Neither is it to assert that adult education will solve all the world's problems or give the final answer to man's obstinate questionings. Since it must always be

undertaken at the free will of the adult man or woman, it can never reach everyone. At the same time, by providing in the community the means of the good life, and by touching men and women at their main interests, it may do more than many are inclined to admit.

In interpreting this end or aim of quality there is need for a measure of tolerance and sweet reasonableness. There have been impatient souls who saw in their own absorbing interests the normative pattern for the interests of all, and who would have nothing to do with adult education that was not immediately directed to the millenium that appeared to them to be just round the corner. Nearly always they have defeated their own ends by their impetuosity, not realizing the difference between good education, that inevitably finds its outlet in action, and poor propaganda, that is just as inevitably poor education. There have been others who believed that only in the perfect society is the improved quality of life attainable. Ultimately they may be right. Immediately, lacking the fulcrum on which to move their world, they have been so impatient of the slow movement of thought and opinion as to deny altogether the value of education in an imperfect world, and scornful of those who have sought to solve the present problem: how to better the world as it is. They have become disillusioned in the presence of that large number who are not prepared to mortgage present life for the vague promise of a doubtfully comfortable future.

To ask for tolerance and sweet reasonableness is not, however, to deny the contradictions that exist in modern society. The need for adult education arises from the existence of those contradictions. It is because the community speaks with so many voices, because the good is presented along with the bad, because the service of the community is so often undertaken with a hidden, if sometimes unconscious, motive of self-interest that directly conflicts with the service that is offered—it is because of all these things that

adult education is so urgently needed. It is one of the means adopted by the organized community to bring what Mannheim³ calls the 'substantially rational' into a world that is rationalized sectionally—rationalized for ends that do not serve the good of man. Organized to enhance the quality of life, adult education can help to break the vicious circle of sectionalized personality in a sectionalized world, and then only if it takes place in an atmosphere of freedom—freedom to reveal needs, freedom to supply them when found.

Such a generalized statement of the social significance of adult education may give an impression of despondency that is not intended. There can be no doubt that life has improved in many ways during the past century. In New Zealand, in particular, living is more civilized than it was even half a century ago; the material standard of existence is higher, and extremes of poverty and wealth less marked, than in many other countries. But if quality is to be the standard of valuation, the need to give reality to the kind of life that these conditions make possible is more urgent today than at any previous time.

The kinds of needs that will be discovered are not to be named in advance in any detail. There are, however, a few fields of life in which adult education may be expected to assist man if democracy is not to perish—or, more accurately, if democracy is ever to be attained. The broad issues of political life must be touched on, and opportunity for discussion of the arguments for and against proposed policy must be provided. If that is not recognized, then democracy is a myth. Adults need to be encouraged to develop a critical approach to social problems, to acquire at least the elements of logical argument. Perhaps the most immediate need is, through practice in discussion of real problems, to expose the common types of fallacy that beset human thought and to break down some of the stereotypes in which human thought is cast. Only the naïve idealist

³ Mannheim, K. *Man and Society*. London 1940.

would hope by adult education to make every man his own authority on every conceivable subject. But the view of democracy that has been outlined in this chapter implies the ability of ordinary men to judge the value of issues fairly presented. Details of policy can never be successfully decided by popular vote; highly technical matters must be the province of the expert. The appreciation of the place of the expert, and the extent to which he can be trusted, is a thing which comes out of adult education; an informed body of opinion is the surest check on the expert who would wrongly trespass beyond his special field. It will be a test of the efficacy of adult education that it achieves, or fails to achieve, a diffusion through the community of a knowledge of the basic problems concerning life in the smaller and the larger community. The problems of community life are properly approached only in a social setting, and adult education will fail if it does not seek to give that larger view that enables judgments to be formed, not on the basis of individual self-interest, but on the broader basis of the good of the community. All this implies that controversy must be a part of the search for quality in life.

The mistake must not be made, on the other hand, of thinking that adult education will begin and end with controversy. The vocational needs of men and women must receive consideration. The skills that men need in their daily work and a knowledge of the social significance of their occupations are things that can no longer be relegated to an inferior position, and must be given a dignified place in any educational plan. There is, too, a large common factor of humanity that exists in men and women of the most diverse opinions, abilities, and occupations, an area of life that is too often overlooked. The business of living is not all tenseness and political discussion, not all a restless search for scientific knowledge or vocational advancement. The simple, meaningful, enjoyable things of life make up a large part of living, to which, in one sense, politics, vocation, and

knowledge are only ancillary. Adult education, as it is understood here, will touch on this part of life, too, where the need exists, giving more meaning to the social arts as well as to those that are essentially individual. But in doing so it may be most effective when least organized, and care must be taken to prevent the unbalanced enthusiast from seeking to organize all men in groups all the time. The main requirement is that opportunity be given for the pursuit of such individual or social interests, so that adults may be tempted to a fuller life through books, advice, and opportunities for new kinds of activity.

At this point a critical reader may interpose the question: In thus including activities of a semi-educational, semi-recreational kind, are you not endangering the whole standard of adult education? To speak of levels, grades, or standards is to come dangerously close to applying the terminology of the school or of the university to adult education. It is partly for this reason that the term 'quality' rather than 'standard' has been used in this chapter. The need for some criteria of quality does, however, arise when one has to determine the sphere of organized, State-supported adult education. Not every activity in which men are interested can lay serious claim to such support. The scale of social and educational values that allows one to decide on the relative merits of drama and cock-fighting, psychology and palmistry, mathematics and astrology, preparation for marriage and 'how to win friends and influence people', cannot in the nature of things be expressed in any brief formula of words. It is possible, however, to state somewhat arbitrarily four less fundamental criteria which, within their limits, can be usefully applied. They are: progressive development, expanding interest, extension in time, and active participation. What these imply is best illustrated by examples. In drama, for instance, the criterion of progressive development may be said to be met when a drama group passes from the reading or acting of a play

that catches attention here and now, to the production of more penetrating plays. Drama that stands still, that involves merely the repetitive performance of the trivial, would be excluded. Similarly, drama meets the criterion of expanding interest when it leads to a study of, say, the principles of construction of a play, the technique of play production (the use of colour and lighting; characterization; grouping, speed, and balance) or to a study of the social significance of the drama as an art form. The third criterion—that of extension in time—is implied in the first two. The educational value of a single experience in one small part of the complex process of bringing a play to life is not to be compared with the study of, and participation in, a programme extending over a year. The criterion of active participation does not imply actual physical exertion, and may be difficult to apply with precision. But unless the supplying of a need calls for some active effort on the part of the participant—whether by study, active discussion, acquirement of skill, or development of appreciation or critical standard of judgment—it cannot meet the requirements of the fourth criterion, which serves to distinguish educational from less exacting forms of occupation.

It is not suggested that the four criteria mentioned will apply equally to all forms of adult education, but some such method of evaluation must replace the traditional concept of standards in measuring achievement in many branches. At the same time, people must be given every possible opportunity and encouragement to explore their chosen fields of interest to the limits of their ability. For certain purposes, and for those whose interests lie in certain directions, the technique of the tutorial class has proved itself beyond question; and one can only hope that, in the future, work of this type will be 'tougher' than at present. But its appeal and usefulness will always be limited, and there is a very real danger that, in attempting to apply it to groups for which it is not suited, one may be guilty of presenting

the superficialities of learning as though they constituted real scholarship, or of encouraging a retreat from practical problems as though knowledge had no relation to action. The academic approach to adult education, too, has certain disadvantages even in the limited field to which it may appear most appropriate. Healthy scepticism may well be a first step to the acquisition of knowledge and a good corrective to the acceptance of facile solutions to difficult problems; but to initiate adult students with real problems into only this first stage of the Socratic search for truth, without providing anything positive, may be to do them a real disservice. As Barbara Wootton has aptly pointed out, 'If one is careful not to advocate *anything*, one can be reasonably sure that one has not foisted one's nostrums, done up to look like scientific truth, upon unsuspecting or defenceless students . . . but to put forward this plea argues a faint heart.' Her solution of the difficulty is valuable:

To overcome this sterility I would propose that, in courses where the topics discussed are intimately related to practical affairs, classes should impose upon themselves a kind of unwritten standing order compelling their treatment of the subject always to come back to, and to be governed by, the question: if I were the man who has to act in these matters, what kind of action does the knowledge and insight that I have been able to acquire from my studies indicate as most desirable: that is, as far as that knowledge and insight goes at present? And of the various courses and possibilities that we have considered, what should I choose, assuming that I were compelled to pick one in preference to the others? And, equally, should it be a standing order that, for a teacher to discuss any practical problem without in the end indicating what he himself thinks the best way of tackling it, is incompetent and irresponsible teaching; and that every criticism is incomplete, and cannot be allowed to rest, as long as it is purely negative.⁴

Undue emphasis on the academic types of adult education arises from neglect of the varying abilities and interests of

⁴ Wootton, Barbara. 'A Plea for Constructive Teaching', *Adult Education*, December 1937.

adults. There can, of course, be no question of the ability of adults to learn, just as there can be no doubt that children can learn. The last twenty years have produced numerous pieces of research evidence to show that adults can acquire new skills: that in general nobody under forty-five should restrain himself from trying to learn anything because of a belief or fear that he is too old to learn; that, if he fails in learning it, inability due to age will very rarely, if ever, be the reason; that adults between twenty-five and forty-five should be expected to learn at nearly the same rate and in nearly the same manner as they would have learned the same thing at fifteen to twenty⁵; that the three traits on which education depends—hearing, seeing, reacting—show a prime at about twenty-five and decline in succeeding years, and that careful arrangement of physical conditions of classrooms for adults is necessary⁶; that even when they were not particularly interested to begin with, people over forty could, with judicious help and encouragement, succeed in learning Russian; that adult learning is itself probably a partial preventive or cure for adult inability to learn; that the rate of learning varies with the thing being learned, but may decrease by about one per cent (of the most efficient performance) each year after the age of twenty-five.⁷ The overall picture appears to indicate that the age at which old-fogyism sets in need not necessarily be as early as was hitherto supposed. It may even be true that most of us *remain* potential geniuses at some things and potential fools at others, and that it may be worth while discovering which. But it must never be forgotten that a random group of adults will vary in ability to about the same extent as a random group of children or adolescents, and that they cannot be all cast in the same pattern. Techniques which will suit some may not suit others. The interests of adults

⁵ Thorndike, Edward L. *Adult Learning*, 177. New York 1928.

⁶ Lorge, Irving. 'Psychological Bases for Adult Learning', *Teachers' College Record*, October 1939.

⁷ Thorndike, Edward L., reported in Beals, Ralph A. and Brody, L. *The Literature of Adult Education*. New York 1941.

will vary; but they will be given added significance from the reality that adult problems assume. Only a very few adults have such strongly-developed academic interests that they are prepared at the outset to promise to follow them over a period of years.

The approach to the problem of educating adults, then, must be many-sided. The technique of classes and essay-writing is becoming less universal in schools; to expect it to succeed with all adults may be to expect the impossible. To make it the main appeal of adult education may be to frighten away, rather than to attract, a large part of the possible clientèle, and is, in any case, to neglect the need for bringing back into the life of society that sense of community without which the individual is left wandering in a social desert. But even if this broadening of the concept of adult education is necessary, the criterion of quality need not be abandoned. What is offered must represent the best that is possible at any given level or in any given field, and always the bait of something even better must be offered, to be seized by those able to reach it.

Interpreted in this way adult education cannot be simply added to what already exists. The task of providing it is nothing short of a challenge to all existing agencies of Government and education. To the State is the challenge to recognize that adult education is no longer a fair-weather luxury, a frill, a sideshow, but the very condition of civilized living. To the agencies of local government the challenge is similar, though capable of statement in more direct terms: that to provide the services making life possible is not enough; to encourage services that make living a reality is as much part of their function as the provision of public utilities. The challenge to the schools is to produce mentally inquisitive adolescents imbued with a desire to continue their education—the kinds of adolescents, in short, who will grow into the kinds of men and women that can benefit by adult education. (This in turn reflects back upon

the organized community, which must provide the means whereby significance may be given to the social literacy that the schools aim to produce.) To the university the challenge is of a different order. Traditionally the pioneer in certain branches of education of the adult, the university has extended its function so as to provide the opportunities of learning to a small body of adults who, while desiring knowledge, have sought ends other than those of the normal university student. The problem now is to provide for a still larger section of the community, whose needs are much more varied and for whom the rigours of academic study make no appeal. Is the university capable of accepting responsibility for this new and enlarged field? The post-primary schools, traditionally concerned with a small section of the community, have today to provide educational experience for all adolescents for at least a few years. This is nothing short of a revolution of function. The time may not be far distant when the concept of tertiary education may undergo a similar change, and the university may be charged with the duty of supplying tertiary education for the whole adult population. Whether it is capable of performing this function, which will involve the supplying of needs of many different kinds at different levels, while at the same time preserving the academic standards it rightly guards so jealously, may well be the major problem of the next fifty years. If the university were to accept this challenge, its present academic work would be quantitatively a minor part of all that it would be called upon to undertake. For who can predict the possible expansion of adult education? It is a new task for a new age.

However the problem is met, it is certain that a great deal of adult education must remain unorganized. Much too, must, from its very nature, remain the province of the voluntary associations that spring up in any healthy community. What organized, State-supported, adult education can do is to reveal needs, to satisfy them when revealed, to

assist voluntary agencies to make their work more effective by placing easily within their reach the services of which the State is custodian, and to ensure that there are in every community temptations to enriched experience.

The aim of adult education, the end in view that justifies it, is to improve the quality of life, to bring form and shape into the community by providing in it the means of achieving the good life. It is an aim at once social and individual, simply because adult education has to do with activities of individual human beings living in society. It is an aim that must be progressively interpreted as new needs are discovered, and it is to be achieved only through the conscious creation in society of the institutions that will give meaning to the complex pattern of modern life.

CHAPTER XI

Needs

* ————— *

THERE was once a firm of general merchants that decided to increase its sales. After some consideration it dispatched Mr. Brown, the new traveller, to the provinces with a small bag of fish-hooks and instructions to test out the demand, but not to remain in any one district more than a few days. Brown was a conscientious fellow and took his fish-hooks to inland towns where they were not wanted, and to coastal towns where they were. He quickly discovered that some districts wanted fish-hooks and some of them did not. When he returned, his manager asked him, 'What do people want in the provinces?' 'Some of them want fish-hooks.' 'Do they want new anchors, or bottle-openers, or spades, or fencing-wire?' That question Brown regretfully admitted that he could not answer.

This is not an unfair picture of what has happened in adult education in New Zealand. In the past, the supply of adult tutors has been so far from saturation point that there has been little opportunity to find the specific needs of the community; and on the few occasions when intensive work has been possible the facilities available have been so limited in range that adequate exploration beyond a comparatively narrow field has been out of the question. Until further intensive work is attempted, all but fairly general statements

about community needs must be largely based on speculation. With certainty one can do little more than state two obvious and basic requirements: teachers, and places properly equipped in which adult education may take place. Given these, and the subsidiary requirements—time to explore the community, freedom to experiment, and a variety of services to offer—it will be possible to reveal the nature and extent of the specific needs. Teachers, buildings, and the rest cannot be provided without funds or supplied without organization; but finance and organization are means to an end, and will for the moment be left out of account.

TUTORS

In the future, as in the past, there must be both full-time and part-time tutors. There will always be some kinds of adult education that can be quite successfully handled by part-time teachers. The immense variety of the work alone would prevent successful coverage by any full-time staff. But the number of full-time tutors must be extended. The curious assumption that adult education can be successfully carried on mainly by lecturers who have already done a day's work, natural though this assumption may have been in pioneering days, will not lead to success in the discovery and meeting of demands.

The search for the kind of person suitable for adult work reveals at once the significant fact that there is no adequate technical term for such a person: 'tutor' places the emphasis on the tutorial class, which can be a suitable means of instruction for only a fraction of the adult population; 'lecturer' preserves the atmosphere of the university; 'teacher', noble word that it has been, smacks too much of the school, and adults are not children; 'organizer' suggests the salesman with his tongue in his cheek, or the objectionable being who likes men in serried ranks; 'adult education officer' has a tang of the army or of a Government depart-

ment; the word 'warden', useful for a resident officer in charge of an educational centre, has unfortunate associations with the Emergency Precautions Service.¹ Ruskin might have called the person we have in mind a Merchant of Leaven. Doubtless a name will emerge in due course: here, for want of a better, the name of 'tutor' will be used, though it will be understood that we are not thinking merely of tutorial functions.

What sort of person, then, should this tutor be? As demands are discovered, men and women of many different attainments will be required, and gradually teams of people with different qualifications will be built up. For the exploratory work, however, selection will have to be made for qualities that have to do with understanding men and women. Youth of itself should not be a disadvantage; some of the best pioneering work in this country has been done in the past by people in their twenties. Ability to approach people, understanding of community life, experience of the adult world, and, above all, an appreciation of the cultural life (in the broadest sense of the term) must be important considerations. Our tutor must have an expert knowledge in at least one field, but his learning or skill should not be of the narrowly specialized type; he must have an awareness of the social significance of the task to be undertaken. Other qualities necessary are patience and thoroughness, warmth, enthusiasm this side of fanaticism, and willingness to learn.

It has been said by a sceptic that the Church of England did one great thing for England: it ensured that in each tiny village there was at least one educated man. With due modification, an adult tutor must live up to some such standard; but, since adult education is not a thing simply of book-learning, the educated man we have in mind must have no trace of intellectual arrogance, and must realize that there are things learned in the school of experience that are as

¹ The same difficulty arose in London when, in 1920, the best title that could be found for the officer in charge of the City of London Institute was 'responsible teacher'.

true as those contained in books. He may be drawn from almost any walk of life; for certain types of work experience of university life should be an advantage, if it has given depth to his learning and taught him that there are many things that he does not know.

The status of such a tutor when appointed is important, and on that will depend in part the attraction of the work to suitable men and women. Hitherto adult education has offered a precarious livelihood. The difficulties of the depression are not easily forgotten. Still less satisfactory have been the prospects of advancement. Constant travelling from place to place, lack of normal home life, the unpleasant feeling that the day may come when one will be too old to perform the work adequately, the danger of mental stagnation—these are deterrents that must have been in the minds of many who have contemplated entering this branch of the teaching profession. It is one thing to move energetically round a district at thirty; quite another to evince equal enthusiasm at fifty-five. There have doubtless been compensations—freedom of action, stimulating contacts with adults, the social significance of the work. But these have not always been sufficient to counteract the disadvantages. The wonder really is that adult education has been so well served. Without reflecting in any way on those who have accepted appointments, one may speculate whether existing conditions do not encourage both the misfit in some other occupation (who may or may not have ability for adult education) and the careerist who regards the work as a stop-gap until something better turns up. Neither of these is likely to prove satisfactory.

Financially, tutorial work has been relatively attractive—in the initial stages. Salaries have ranged in normal times from about £400 per annum upwards, and have been similar to payments made to members of the sub-professorial staffs of the university colleges. The upper limit of salary in one district has recently tended to approach that of senior

lecturers. Superannuation rights have been obtained by contribution to the Teachers' Superannuation Fund of the Government service. The demands of the work are such that opportunities for additions to salary through extra work are almost non-existent. It is clear that nothing less than the present scale of salaries can be considered; to attract the right type of person some prospect of promotion may be necessary.

A danger that has been observed in the past is that a resident tutor or a tutor allocated to one small district may find that he is temperamentally unsuited to the particular task, or that after a few years he has 'talked himself out' and has no longer much to offer to his hearers. The danger would be diminished if staffing were increased, because it would then be possible to exchange tutors before they had ceased to contribute to the life of the community (or before they had learned too much about their community!). Larger staffing, too, would enable older men and women to be moved in to administrative posts where their experience could be used to great advantage.

So far we have been considering those full-time workers to each of whom will be allotted a fixed area. Their work will be that of teaching classes, and finding latent needs or even creating needs. The combination of the work of organization and teaching appears to be necessary at this level, because the best method of 'selling' adult education is to demonstrate its working. An organizer who does not teach may be successful where a demand already exists; he is unlikely to do much good where the demand has to be discovered. The resident or area tutors in rural areas should be responsible for using or co-ordinating any local services that may be useful and should have an intimate knowledge of all national and district services that may be obtained. They should know, for instance, the details of the working of the Country Library Service, the Education Department's Correspondence School, the Technical Education Branch

of the Education Department, and the National Film Library. Ideally, in rural areas, adult education work would be carried out by a man and his wife, both of whom had duties. The minor difficulties that might arise are not insuperable.² In the cities and larger towns, where the requirements will be different from those of rural areas, the duties of the resident tutor will include, in addition, the handling of certain special types of work such as lunch-hour discussions and lecturesses in factories. Recent experiments have revealed a very great volume of such work for which special tutors might well be allocated. Conditions are not always ideal, but some of the more modern factories have staff meeting-rooms well suited for the purpose. To conduct classes of this type successfully a tutor requires considerable experience, and he (or she) must be able to gain the confidence of both employer and employee.

The work of the resident tutor requires supplementing by that of specialist tutors—highly skilled in methods of adult education, but having a specialist knowledge in certain fields—who can be brought in to assist resident or area tutors either by visits at regular intervals, or by concentrated work for shorter periods. Such specialists should be primarily experts in special subjects, groups of subjects, or particular activities, including music and the arts, and should work from a district or national base.

Supposing that people suitable for appointment as resident or specialist tutors can be found, their training should not be a long process. Some will be drawn from the teaching profession; some will come from other callings; but their interest will scarcely have been aroused if they have not already had some contact with adult education, perhaps as part-time tutors. The art of teaching adults is not easily reducible to clear-cut principles. There are, nevertheless, some things that could be done to help prospective tutors. They should be made aware of the pioneering nature of the

² A plan of this kind has worked successfully in the staffing of Native schools.

work; they should receive some instruction in elementary psychology, should know something of sociology and of the principles on which community surveys are conducted, and should learn something of what is done in other countries, not that they may copy slavishly, but that they may adapt general principles to local conditions. This preparation could be given in a concentrated course on the lines of an army school. It would not aim at being exhaustive but would serve as an introduction to problems—a stimulus to further reading and investigation. A great deal of their preparation should be practical. The conducting of discussion groups, the keeping of the necessary records, the methods of preparing and presenting lectures, and of organizing art and craft groups—these are things that are best learned by watching someone who knows how to do them. A couple of months as observer-assistant at some established centre, or, better still, at more than one, should be sufficient. A brief visit to the headquarters of relevant national agencies should also help. The less the work is reduced to routine the better; for no stock method of approach will work successfully in all districts. The 'in-service' training of tutors should not be neglected, and frequent opportunities for discussion of common problems with tutors in their own or neighbouring districts and for keeping abreast of new developments in their special branches of adult education are important. Some of the discussion courses for use by country groups might well be written by tutors who were relieved of other duties for a period sufficiently long to allow the necessary study and research to be undertaken.

Part-time tutors will generally be selected for their interest in adult education and for their expert knowledge. With the expansion of the content of adult education they, too, will increasingly be drawn from people engaged in many different occupations. In the past, part-time tutors have been drawn mainly from the staffs of university and training

colleges and from the teaching service. University teachers are in this country often over-worked and, having little enough time for research, run the risk of sacrificing promotion by expending in adult education time that might be occupied in investigation. For some branches of adult education, however, their assistance is indispensable. Members of the teaching service should play an increasing part in adult work, and should, as part of their routine training, be made aware of the importance of adult education so that, when they go out into the schools, they may be ready to co-operate with tutors. Not all teachers appear to be aware of what can be done under the Manual and Technical Regulations of the Education Department, which have been used to good effect by AEWS, and under which certain types of classes may be more readily and appropriately conducted than under the rules drawn up by the ordinary agencies of adult education. The objection that the returns and records required by the Education Department may be irksome is of little validity, for expansion of adult education under any system of State-aid will inevitably involve more clerical work.

There is one source from which adult education workers may have to be recruited that has not been adequately tapped in the past: the country school teaching service. Some country teachers may be very useful as tutors; all should have some knowledge of the importance of adult education in rural areas. Here one is touching on a problem much broader than that of adult education. Hitherto country service has too often been looked upon as a sentence of banishment for two or three years before the necessary qualifications for town service have been obtained. If rural education, including rural adult education, is ever to be properly provided, teachers entering the country service will require not simply additional training, but more careful selection and a training more specifically oriented towards the needs of the rural community. The success of adult work in rural areas will

depend largely on the co-operation shown by teachers. The extension of the training college system of third-year specialization to cater more adequately for those young people seeking to make country teaching their career is a much needed reform. All rural teachers should learn through practical demonstration something of the work of adult education,³ and should know what the agencies of adult education have to offer. For a select few who, after some years of teaching, are found to be fitted for special organizing or tutoring work there should be refresher courses in adult education, similar to the courses suggested for the training of tutors. On successful completion of the special course, they might either enter full-time adult work or be drafted to selected schools which would serve as outposts of organized adult education. Special allowances either in staffing of schools or in emolument of teachers should be made to encourage this work. A two- or three-teacher school might perhaps be allowed an extra member of the staff who would give part of his time to adult education and devote the remainder to specialist work in the school. Schools selected for this special treatment would have to be strategically placed, and would have to be built or equipped for the dual purpose they would be required to perform.

BUILDINGS

To generalize about the required fabric of adult education is as difficult as to deal with the detailed qualifications of the tutor. One thing is certain: adult education cannot be expected to continue permanently (or even to develop satisfactorily) in any odd room that no one else happens to be

³ A few selected students from the Wellington Teachers' Training College now go to Feilding to observe the work both of the Community Centre and the Agricultural High School. The Ministerial Conference on Education (1944), recommended that increased attention be given to the training of all teachers in the understanding of rural life through training college courses, and favoured the encouragement of third-year students specializing in association with the departments of rural education and sociology in the agricultural colleges of the University.

wanting at the time. The pioneers of working men's education in England carried on their learning in a white-washed garret; good classes have been held in this country in boatsheds, in unsuitable classrooms, in school shelter-sheds, in many places with inadequate heating, lighting, or ventilation. Such conditions should be considered things of the past. Classes, in the conventional meaning of the term, can be carried on in some of these places; but any extension of adult education will require buildings where adults can do things—develop their hobbies, produce their plays, watch films, practise their arts, and carry on their discussions in comfort. The atmosphere of charity and the work-house will not do in the twentieth century. The principal of the City Literary Institute, one of the most successful of the many London institutes, has put this need well when, writing from long experience, he has maintained:

If adult education is properly conceived as a way of life for the adult when he is released from economic and other compulsions and free to choose, then its purpose cannot be achieved and integrated except in a social setting. And a social setting implies a functional meeting [place]. If family life requires a home, and religious observance a church, and conviviality a four-ale or cocktail bar according to taste, then also adult education ought to have its appropriate expression in terms of space, furniture, equipment, and atmosphere. Without this it is nought. This implies buildings of special design, fitted for adult use. . . .⁴

Until such buildings are provided, it will be useless to speak of 'meeting demands' or to try to ascertain whether people respond to adult education. Properly conceived and equipped buildings, too, may be the necessary first step in bringing back a feeling of unity and common purpose into communities that are sectionalized and disintegrated by the multitudinous groupings and interests of the present day. This is no new-fangled scheme; but a demand that has been half-consciously developing here and elsewhere for more

⁴Williams, T. G. 'Adult Education in London', *Journal of Education* (London), October 1943, 452.

than fifty years, and has become more urgent with the enormous growth of commercialized amusement and scientific invention of the last twenty-five years. The need was partially realized by the leaders of the university extension movement in the nineties⁵, it was given practical expression in the Cambridge Rural Colleges, in the Nottingham experiments of adapting the Cambridge rural scheme to an urban situation, in Slough, and in the men's and women's institutes of London. In New Zealand the mechanics' institutes of the early settlements indirectly met the need, though their accommodation was often inadequate. The special need in rural areas was stressed by Belshaw some twenty years ago:

So far as New Zealand is concerned community organization is fragmentary and lacks vitality. Almost the only community groups with any permanent and general appeal are the co-operative society, the school, and in some instances the farmers' union and the country church; but these are special organizations which confine their activities within narrow limits. They do not provide what is most required, a pivot or focal point for the cultural and social life of the countryside. If the scattered family units are to be welded into communities exerting their full, legitimate influence on the development and progress of the nation, some such focal point is required.⁶

More recently the need has been explicitly stated by Strachan⁷, and has received practical expression in the Auckland WEA and the work of the Somersets at Oxford and Feilding.⁸ In the last few years, partly because of the

⁵ See, for instance, Mackinder, H. J. and Sadler, M. E. *University Extension, Past, Present, and Future* (London 1891), which outlines a scheme stretching from university centres, through towns of 40,000 or more, and small towns to villages, and includes plans, specifications, and estimated costs of buildings.

⁶ Belshaw, H. 'The WEA and the Rural Community', *New Zealand Highway*, 2. 10 April 1928.

⁷ A scheme for a community centre at Rangiora has been fully worked out for some years. See *The School Looks at Life*. Wellington 1938.

⁸ See Chapter VIII. An outline of the basic requirements of community centres and of a possible means of organization and administration was drawn up by a special committee of the Auckland Advisory Committee in November 1943. The Ministerial Conference on Education (1944) recommended that the Council of Adult Education be asked to appoint a committee to consider the scope and planning of community centres, and to prepare a suitable brochure.

undoubted success of the Feilding Community Centre, there has been a widespread interest in ways of meeting new needs.⁹ Much of this interest is genuine and well-informed, and one admires the very great keenness displayed by many local committees. At the same time there are some schemes that are inspired by uninformed enthusiasm, and others that are frankly naïve. A recommendation of the Ministerial Conference on Education, 1944, is much to the point:

That this Conference favour[s] the establishment of further Community Centres, but believes—

- (a) that such centres should normally develop in close association with adult as well as other educational services; and
- (b) that any policy of Government subsidy should be confined to centres which meet certain minimum requirements in this respect.

Enthusiasm for buildings is in danger of running ahead of practical possibilities, and it is a sobering thought that the capital cost of three new centres would probably exceed the annual total expended on adult education for the whole of New Zealand. The present writer is not prepared to recommend any gigantic scheme for setting down in rural communities isolated centres which, being unable to provide the necessary services, might bring discredit on the whole scheme and become 'a monstrous regiment' of white elephants. For buildings alone will remain just buildings. The soul of a community centre is the man (or the man and the woman) in charge. Without attempting to conduct all the educational work himself, the resident tutor (or officer in charge, director, or whatever it may be decided to call this person) will be the essential link between the local community and the services that can be focused on the centre. One might describe him as a social activator, or a catalyst, whose duty it is to find what is lacking in his

⁹ Plans have been made in Waimate, Whangarei, Opoitiki, Hastings, Runanga, Titrangi and elsewhere. A centre opened in Dargaville in October, 1944, provides classes in dressmaking, commercial subjects, and physical training, while an open forum is held fortnightly. It is understood that there is some prospect of the appointment of a supervisor in 1945.

community and to tempt people to seek satisfaction for inchoate demands. It is a difficult task. A false move may produce suspicion or dissension; impatience may defeat its own ends; the faintest suggestion of patronage may antagonize the community he seeks to help. His job will be many times more difficult than that of a tutor conducting a class: his character must be beyond reproach; he must have resources of personality that can enable him to live in a community not for a few days, but for years, and still retain respect.¹⁰ Even this paragon of all the virtues will not produce results immediately. He will have to show that he can 'deliver the goods', but they will be very intangible goods, not measured in figures and showy achievement, but in the lives of men—in the quality of the community. It will be a difficult task; but the fact that a thing is difficult is no excuse for not doing it.

While the resident tutor is the first essential, he must not be expected to work without equipment. He must be given a very free hand in the use of whatever buildings are placed at his disposal. To suggest that the centre need not be too elaborate or ambitious is not to deny that the tutor should be given every possible assistance in supplying genuine needs when he finds them. Community centre buildings should be capable of modification to meet new needs; they will undoubtedly be added to or altered. In some instances the centre may be established in an existing building altered for the purpose. Niggardliness, however, may defeat the whole object of the scheme. On the other hand, no centre should be established until a very thorough survey of the area has been completed, and until some evidence of willingness to co-operate has been displayed by the community.

If it is agreed that buildings are necessary, the question naturally arises: What kind of buildings? No single answer can be given to this question. There are many needs that

¹⁰ The need for a resident officer has been demonstrated many times by the way in which the results achieved by a rural school teacher are lost when he is replaced by some one who lacks the same vision.

must ultimately be met, but in its early stages a centre will not be designed to meet them all. Some of the essentials of a fully developed centre are indicated below:

(1) It must be 'a pleasant place, an adult place'. So far as is possible, it must be worthy of the community in which it is placed, and should be designed to avoid the appearance of being an 'institution'.

(2) It must have well-furnished rooms for meetings and discussions. Lighting, heating, ventilation, and the acoustic properties of the rooms must be looked to; they must be as far removed as possible from 'classrooms' where teachers talk down to pupils. Rearrangement of furniture should be possible to meet social as well as intellectual needs.

(3) There should be places where active employments may be engaged in—arts and crafts, dressmaking and cooking demonstrations, and the like.

(4) A library should be housed in the building. In the smaller centres the building should be the repository for the books of the Country Library Service; elsewhere, there should be a supply of books in special demand for whatever classes, discussions, or hobbies are at the moment being carried on. Part of one room should be suitable for the exhibition of prints of pictures and similar displays lent to the centre under a scheme similar to that operated by the National Art Gallery.

(5) There should be provision for recreational needs including both quiet games and physical activities.

(6) Facilities for dramatic work (combined with (5) in some centres), listening to music, and looking at films will be necessary. Stage fittings can be improvised up to a point, but experience with school halls leads one to stipulate at least the framework of stage and proscenium, and a means of passing from one side of the stage to the other, as essentials. These requirements are too often neglected, and it is not easy to do much with a stage where the electric wiring is designed to carry one or two 100-watt lamps.

(7) A room should, in the ideal centre, be set apart for the entertainment of very young children on market days, or on afternoons when their mothers attend classes. The value of a nursery play centre or crèche has been amply demonstrated. Much of the work in child study and family problems done in the community centre will be an outgrowth of the nursery class.

(8) A well-equipped kitchen is highly desirable.

(9) In small towns, where accommodation is not provided elsewhere, the office of the Plunket Nurse, specializing in pre-school work, should be situated in the centre. This is not simply a means of convenience, but is stipulated in order to cause a large number of people to visit the centre. Either jointly with these rooms, or separately—again where facilities are not already provided elsewhere—there should be equipment for the periodical visit of the doctor or the district nurse.

(10) To these requirements should be added in some areas facilities for adolescents. There is much to be said for providing separate accommodation for at least junior adolescents. The boisterous activity of the young has not always mixed happily with the staid employments of the more mature, and the presence of older people may unnecessarily restrain the expression of adolescents. As an alternative to separate accommodation, certain times or days might be set aside for girls and boys: but this arrangement should be regarded as a second best.

(11) There will naturally be a room for use by the tutor.

It may be repeated that not all these amenities can be provided at once; nor is the list exhaustive; but in designing a centre those responsible should bear in mind the possible extension of the building to include most of these requirements. Only a town of about three thousand or four thousand inhabitants, and particularly a market town, would be able to support all these facilities. In more remote areas,

less elaborate centres might be built; while in some districts the requirements might be met by additions to the existing school. The joint use of the building by school children and adults raises many problems, but has the advantage that both children and adults benefit by the additional equipment that is then economically possible. Even at the present time many a country school is the scene of most of the local meetings. Where school buildings have been properly planned and have been staffed by teachers who have sympathy with adult education, as has happened in some parts of England, adult community life can be fostered in the same buildings; but in larger areas separate premises are desirable for housing the adult activities. The use of the same site for both school and centre has much to commend it, and allows of the common use of halls and gymnasiums.¹¹ The adult atmosphere of the centre is very important, however, and should be preserved at all costs.

Different problems occur in larger towns where more specialized needs arise, and where efficiency may dictate the centralization of certain adult education activities in one building. Any city of more than 30,000 inhabitants should have some centre of adult education where classes and discussion groups may meet, and where people can come to seek advice about the satisfaction of their needs. The essentials of such a building are similar to those already specified, but, because of the larger population to be served, it may be equipped on a more elaborate scale. There should be, for example, a fully equipped little theatre with rehearsal rooms, and a hall suitable for chamber music, gramophone recitals, and the showing of documentary and other educational films. Buildings of this type, while serving as centres for adult education in the city, would also conveniently form servicing depots and administrative offices for adult

¹¹ It is customary in some areas in England to place the responsibility of supervising adult work in the hands of the first assistant of a school, who receives additional remuneration and a lighter programme of day-time duties by way of compensation.

education in the surrounding districts. Properly equipped headquarters in the four main cities are among the most urgent needs at the present time, and their establishment would do much to facilitate the proper servicing of rural areas. The largest cities, too, will eventually each require several suburban centres placed in strategic positions.

The question of control of the centres will be discussed in Chapter XII. Here it may be noted that there is need for some general policy in regard to their functions and establishment. A properly conceived centre for adult education and community life is, as Somerset has pointed out, a very different thing from a civic centre, which has too often been thought of as a pretentious block of buildings housing the administrative offices of the local authority. There has also been a tendency to confuse the idea of a community centre with that of a recreational centre, or that of a health centre¹². There may be some areas where such functions may be combined successfully; but any scheme will fail to produce the desired results unless it places adult education (in the broadest possible sense of the term) as its central objective.

Half the value of a community centre (as the term has been understood in this chapter) arises from two fundamental functions: that of bringing to the community the visiting lecturers or tutors, films, books, pictures, and music that are found to be necessary; and that of establishing close liaison with the other services—educational, recreational, advisory—that may be offered by national or other agencies operating in the locality. It is, indeed, the 'servicing point' of its area. There can be no question of competing with existing agencies and wastefully duplicating services. Thus some adult needs are best met by the agencies of vocational education or, in rural areas, by the advisory services of the

¹² Reports of meetings held in one North Island town during a Community Week indicated fairly clearly that there was some confusion between at least two ideas—a medical centre and a centre of cultural life. It would be unfortunate if similar confusion were to occur elsewhere.

Department of Health, or of the Department of Agriculture. The purpose of a community centre, it will be remembered, is to co-ordinate the life of the community, not to sectionalize it still more by the addition of yet another to the list of competing agencies. At the same time, a community centre is not a substitute for the life of the home, or the other essential associations of community, and the words of caution of an experienced English administrator are worth bearing in mind:

Good accommodation for meetings of all kinds is a necessity in any modern community with its many activities, but the deliberate organization of the secular communal life as a kind of missionary endeavour seems to me rather a presumption.¹³

A properly conducted centre, on the other hand, will give more life to worthwhile groups by the assistance it will bring within their reach.

EQUIPMENT

The equipment required for an adult education centre of the type contemplated will be of two kinds—some permanent, some on loan. Blackboards, maps and charts, probably filmstrips and certainly a considerable amount of material required for the practice of arts and crafts, will be in constant demand and will be in most centres. There will be a great deal, however, that will be required only occasionally, and cannot be duplicated without unwarranted expenditure. Until recently adult education has lagged behind other branches of education in the use of modern teaching aids; but to provide them is a costly business and some of them, as AEWS has discovered, require expert handling. There will therefore be many advantages in having the centre serviced from some district or national depot. No one who has seen the Country Library Service at work

¹³ Smith, W. O. Lester, 'Adult Education for Democracy,' *Adult Education*, December 1937.

would suggest that each centre should attempt to build up a comprehensive book stock. Nor can gramophone records, or films, prints, plays, or music, be duplicated with efficiency in local areas, whereas they can be supplied from district or national depots. Yet all these things will be necessary if adult education is to meet modern needs. From central depots travelling tutors, skilled in the use of expensive material, will select what they require for the work they are to undertake. The district headquarters might well house a portion of the recently established National Film Library.

SERVICES

Provided proper co-ordination is achieved, there is no reason why community centres should not be the means of bringing to isolated communities many of the amenities at present available to a very limited extent in the main towns. Parties of musicians—string quartets, vocalists, and (if a reasonably good piano is available) pianists—might be sent to give recitals in the centres. There are many areas where the need of such entertainment is as great as in military camps. If there were ever developed in this country anything resembling the Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA), the centres could easily provide the necessary local links. The costs of such organized tours would be spread over a number of areas, and the scheme would serve the double purpose of encouraging a high standard of performance, and of providing experience in serious listening that should do much to build up the taste of the local community. Into the details of the standard of programmes, costs, and organization it is not proposed to venture. This, however, may be said: part of the success of postwar reconstruction will depend upon making rural life more attractive to young people. If in schools they are to spend more time on music and drama, it would seem only reasonable that some opportunity should be given for

experience of an enjoyment for which the schools will presumably be preparing their pupils.

What has been said of music applies to other services. A notable example is the arrangement of exhibitions either of prints, or of original work of New Zealand artists. Some experiments have already been conducted along these lines. What is wanted is a scheme to bring art to the people, and, as with libraries, it is not, or should not be, necessary in the twentieth century to live in a city to experience the advantages of civilized life.

There are, too, many services, particularly those having to do with health and the welfare of children, that could be brought to the community through the centre. The centre will be a place where at least some of the adult community can readily be approached. And they can be approached in the atmosphere of freedom and honest inquiry that will, one hopes, be developed by the kind of resident tutor that has been described.

So much for the services that can be 'fed to' the community. Even more important will be those for which a request arises within the community itself. Knowing what is available, the resident tutor will be constantly on the alert to bring to his district services for which there is a need. Many advisory services are at present available, but they are not always known and cannot always be brought to the community when required. Interests can be fostered when there is someone on the spot to foster them. Without that stimulus, interest may flag; with it, the interest may be made the beginning of a process the end of which no one can predict. Adult education does not start at any one point. It may start with even a casual inquiry about horses, gardens, dogs, houses; and may end, if it ever ends, in a permanent and continuing interest that may range through time and space.¹⁴

¹⁴ A Country Library Service officer, on visiting a particular area, found that there was a keen demand for books about diseases of dogs. He discovered that there had been an epidemic of distemper in the district and that several valuable animals had been lost. Requests like this would, where the resident tutor had the confidence of the community, come in to the centre. The point is that the tutor would be there all the time; the CLS van calls twice a year!

CO-ORDINATION

There is need for much more co-ordination of services than exists at present, and it must take place at all levels. One of the greatest lessons of AEWS has been the degree of co-ordination possible where the essentials have been provided: staff¹⁵, finance, and co-operation. It is only reasonable to ask that this co-operation should be carried over into civilian life after the war. The problems are immense, but when one takes stock of all the agencies operating—the WEA, ACE, SAR, university extension, the rural education work of university colleges of agriculture, Broadcasting Service, Department of Agriculture, Department of Health, Physical Welfare and Recreation Branch, Technical Education Branch, Country Library Service, National Film Library, Plunket Society, Government Correspondence School, university colleges, in their normal work—one realizes more and more the imperative need for a means of co-ordinating these services for the good of the community. The writer believes that the provision of a place in the community through which the educational functions of all these services can be presented in planned fashion is an important part of the solution of the problem of adult education. At the national level there is need for some agency that can assist in co-ordinating their activities, obtain and give advice, seek means of satisfying felt needs, and help in planning their appeals to the community so that wasteful overlapping may be avoided. Some permanent officer charged with these duties will be necessary, and without him little can be expected of the most well-intentioned national council or committee. Since adult education to be effective must be planned, too, on a district basis, a district officer is also an imperative need.

The present lack of co-operation between adult education

¹⁵ AEWS has in one district alone a staff of about 40. The total of all civilians engaged on a full-time basis for the provision of adult education for the whole of New Zealand is nothing like this number.

and a State-owned Broadcasting Service is one of the most peculiar contradictions of our society. Some suggestions have been made elsewhere. Here it may be repeated that a portion of the time of at least some stations should be made available to increase interest in adult education, and to work out, in conjunction with agencies of adult education, experiments in suitable techniques for the direct use of the radio for the unashamed education of adults. Talks supplementing discussion courses that are being used by organized listening groups have never been adequately tried out. It cannot be said dogmatically that they would not be successful. Collaboration with those responsible for organizing adult education, rather than the setting up of a separate branch of the Broadcasting Service, appears the most useful line of experiment.

ADULT EDUCATION OF THE MAORI

Experiments in providing adult education for the Maori people have not been numerous. The need for such work is obvious even to the casual observer. In May, 1939, a conference of young Maori leaders, held at Auckland University College, gave rise to some important suggestions: the holding of future conferences; the setting up of an organization to promote adult education among the Maori people; the formation of discussion groups in the Maori Tribal Committees; co-operation with pakeha youth groups; the establishment of a marae in Auckland; the recognition in practice that educational and research facilities belong to the Maori equally with the pakeha; and the production of a periodical devoted to Maori affairs. The war, which broke out a few months later, took many of the most promising of the young Maoris into the armed forces. The Conference, however, demonstrated the value of such discussions of Maori problems, and showed that there was a most promising field ready to be cultivated. The quality of potential

leadership, in particular, was noted by the Conference Committee in these terms:

As teachers with experience in the University and Adult Education Movements, we were much impressed with the high quality of the discussions. The young members expressed themselves earnestly and convincingly. They compared favourably in knowledge, clarity, and effectiveness of expression with any similar group of University students.¹⁶

Experiments of a similar kind may prove valuable in the future and may point to the solution of many of the problems that beset the Maori people. No scheme of adult education that does not provide for the Maori, either within the general framework or by some specially constituted agency, can be considered complete. The special form to be taken by Maori adult education must be determined by those who have a special knowledge of his problems and ways of life. It would seem, however, that home-making, health, and adjustment to pakeha civilization are fields in which there is need for experiment. Any plan adopted may depend for its success upon the discriminating use of Maori leadership, and should certainly be such as to give expression to the artistic and social gifts of the race. The work of the Ngati-Poneke Club, which now has a well-equipped meeting place in Wellington, may serve as a pointer to what could be done elsewhere.

RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTIONS

Many who have had some contact with the Danish Folk High Schools have speculated concerning the possibility of adapting the Scandinavian technique to problems in other countries.¹⁷ There may yet be room for experiment along these lines, though climatic differences alone constitute

¹⁶ *Report of Young Maori Conference*, cyclostyled and circulated to various individuals and libraries, 1939.

¹⁷ At least one attempt has been made to establish a Folk High School in this country, and the establishment of similar institutions has been extensively advocated in England.

difficulties not always realized.¹⁸ There is room, however, for a few residential schools, not necessarily set apart completely for adult education, but used for the greater part of the year for other purposes. Some of the hostels under the control of the governing bodies of secondary schools might be more extensively used for summer and winter schools. Successful WEA schools have been conducted at Wesley College, Paerata, at Feilding Agricultural High School, and at numerous places in the Canterbury area; but these have extended over relatively short periods. Opportunity should be offered for the holding of similar schools for longer periods. Great benefit can be derived from concentrated periods of residential life, and from opportunities for the exchange of views between town and country residents. The value of short intensive courses as a means of training leaders for discussion groups has been proved many times.

If a system of compulsory continued education of adolescents were ever introduced into New Zealand, the establishment of residential institutions of the type suggested for rural youth in England would seem to be a logical part of such a scheme. Buildings made available for this purpose would be of greater value if arrangements could be made to allow them to be used by adults when they were not required for their normal purpose.

A need may eventually arise for residential institutions devoted entirely to adult education, and providing, among other things, a valuable training-ground for adult tutors. In the immediate future, however, there are likely to be many other and more urgent needs to be met. Week-end schools, summer and winter schools, can be organized without elaborate equipment, and should be encouraged.

¹⁸ Cattle have to be housed in Denmark during the severe winter, and there is a long period during which youths can be spared from the farms. New Zealand dairy farms, however, particularly those concerned with 'town supply', have no such slack period.

ADOLESCENT EDUCATION

It has been evident for some time that the present agencies of adult education do not adequately reach the important group of people between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five years, and that most people who link up with adult classes have for many years had no association with organized education.¹⁹ Without discussing the whole problem of the continued education of the adolescent, one may say quite categorically that adult education will continue to be less effective than it ought to be until this gap is closed. The new developments in post-primary education, if they are to achieve one of their major purposes, will create a generation of young people much more eager for continued education than were their predecessors; and at the same time the schools themselves will be looking more and more to adult education to carry forward the work they have begun. Special provision for continued education and the tapering-off of formal education is in many ways more important than a further raising of the leaving-age. Preceded by adequate facilities for continued education and for the training of adolescents up to the age of eighteen, adult education may be expected to affect an increasing number of people better fitted to benefit from it.

During the last five or six years there has been an increasing interest in youth work, both in the churches and among secular organizations. While there has been nothing approaching a genuine Youth Movement such as developed in Germany and elsewhere in the early years of this century, there are a few encouraging signs that youth will respond when given opportunity, and will, with a little encouragement, make opportunity for itself. What is not always realized is the need for linking certain parts of youth activities with the existing agencies of adult education, while retaining the special character of activities that have proved

¹⁹ See p. 207.

attractive to youth. Young People's Clubs can be assisted by services established to aid adult education, and help offered in this way may be more effective than any effort made by older members of the community to organize youth in a way that young people have every right to resent.

There is one group of adolescents than can be reached fairly readily. If, after the war, compulsory training for people between the ages of eighteen and twenty for one or other of the armed forces should become a part of national policy, or if a period of national service should be introduced²⁰, it is important that such period of intensive training should be thought of as educational, and designed to prepare the trainee for the duties of citizenship. The portion of time allotted to this purpose might be used in two important ways: (1) for an educational and recreational programme conducted by some such agency as AEWS working in close collaboration with other agencies of adult education, and (2) for experience in the practice of community service. The value of the first of these is too obvious to require elaboration. The second may be a little less obvious. What one has in mind is the performance of service to the community as a necessary step in earning the right of graduation into the adult society. There are many kinds of work that could be performed by young people to this end—afforestation to prevent soil erosion; the building of youth hostels and youth centres; the opening up of forest tracks; the making of recreation grounds; assisting in hospitals; practice in mothercraft. Girls as well as boys would benefit by such experience.

To those who object that this smacks of what happened in Hitler's Germany the reply is simple: it does, with one great difference—the end in view. It would be foolish to deny the effectiveness of many of the things done by the Nazis without realizing that what is objectionable is not their efficient organization, but the object of that organiz-

²⁰ Such a scheme has already received serious consideration in the U.S.A., though there has as yet been no move to establish it in New Zealand.

ation, the end that it served. If for the deification of the Führer, the enlargement of the Fatherland, and the preparation for world conquest there be substituted the service of a free community and the improvement of the inner life of the individual, there are many techniques that could be conveniently borrowed from our enemies. After all, the Adolf Hitler Schools for the making of Nazi leaders are adaptations of the English Public Schools; youth movements were not invented by Hitler; and the Nordic myths, used to such purpose by the Nazis, were no small part of the inspiration of the Danish Folk High Schools. It is significant that, despite its existence as a branch of the army, AEWS has not been accused of discouraging free discussion.

FIELDS OF INTEREST

It might reasonably be expected that some indication be given of the fields of study in which development is necessary. The most that can safely be done is to note that there are certain tried subjects that have stood the test of time—economics, history, psychology, current affairs, public speaking²¹, and literature, which will doubtless continue to be in demand. Adults are interested in bringing up their children and in topics connected with child development. Many women are interested in home arts, food values, and clothing. Music and drama have a wide appeal. But to go further and to enumerate the fields of study that ought to interest adults would be to run counter to the whole spirit of adult education, which is essentially a matter of finding needs and ways of satisfying them. That little experiment has been possible in arts, crafts, and the more practical activities generally, is true; and these offer an important

²¹ It may be of interest to remark that the Board of Education, England, in a memorandum (Adult Education Regulations No. 6) stated that they were not prepared to recognize courses . . . under the heading of Public Speaking which aim at training students in the art of expression without regard to the value or quality of what is expressed.

field for development. But whatever the 'subjects' that attract adults, two things must be kept in mind: the rigid separation that has existed (more in theory than in practice, it must be admitted) between vocational and cultural studies cannot longer be allowed to befog the discussion; and the adult in modern society needs encouragement to develop a critical appraisal of the world around him, not that he may lose faith in himself or in his society, but that he may be alive to the problems that modern living presents, and may intelligently make his contribution, however humble, to their solution.

WANTED: A POLICY

At the present time, when the rising tide of interest in adult education appears likely to swamp the resources of existing agencies, the need for expansion of personnel and services is both urgent and immediate. The opportunity for development is probably greater today than ever in the past. But it cannot safely be assumed that, without a co-ordinated effort to meet the demand, the interest will continue. Much will depend upon the financial support which adult education receives. But, perhaps most of all, a national policy is required; for, without some coherent national policy expressed in general but unmistakable terms, adult education will be doomed to wander in the wilderness for another half-century. The following appear to be the essentials of such a policy:

- (1) It should provide for flexibility, because local needs must be met in ways that appeal locally.
- (2) It should recognize that adults cannot, in a democracy, be dragooned into education.
- (3) It should embody (not by way of lip-service, but through a statement capable of being translated into fact) the principle that adult education is as necessary today as primary education was in, say, 1870 and as secondary education was in 1900—that, in short, adult education is the

means of ensuring the permanence of what has been gained through other forms of education. It is doubly necessary in a democracy as the means of making the democratic life a reality.

(4) The relevant services of the State (including the Broadcasting Service) as part of their duty, should be required to co-operate with the agencies of adult education when called upon to do so.

(5) Whenever a real need is demonstrated, everything possible should be done to satisfy it.

(6) Local bodies should be encouraged (by subsidy or otherwise) to provide part of the necessary funds for adult education.

(7) The establishment of community centres, where the need can be demonstrated, and where there are satisfactory guarantees as to the quality of the services offered, should be encouraged by making funds available to meet part of the initial cost, and to meet the salary of the tutor or tutors appointed (and possibly part of the cost of maintenance and development).

SUMMARY

The present needs of adult education in New Zealand that have been discussed in this chapter may now be briefly enumerated:

(1) *Tutors.* (a) Full-time tutors both (i) resident and (ii) visiting, carefully selected from different walks of life and trained for the work they are to undertake;

(b) part-time specialists who, as at present, will carry out much of the work in specialist branches;

(c) teachers who, in addition to their normal training for work in schools, have received special training in the pioneering work of adult education;

(d) teachers who have been in the service for some years and who have proved their ability to understand the problems of the

rural community; these, after brief training, may be drafted partly or wholly into adult work.

(2) *Buildings*. (a) In country areas (separately or in conjunction with country schools, depending upon the size of the community) buildings not necessarily elaborate, but specially designed to function as community centres;

(b) in larger towns, similar centres for adult educational work;

(c) district centres and depots from which the community centres of the district, and country groups, can be supplied with written courses, study material, tutors, and all the services that may in the course of time prove necessary.

Buildings set apart for adult education must be places where (i) an adult atmosphere is preserved; (ii) proper lighting, heating, and ventilation are provided; (iii) informal meetings and discussions can take place; (iv) the pursuit of active interests in music, drama, arts and crafts may be encouraged; (v) people can 'drop in' at any time to obtain information or seek assistance in personal problems; (vi) small children can be looked after when their mothers are attending morning or afternoon classes.

(3) *Equipment*. Modern teaching aids of all kinds must be available either permanently in the community centre, or on loan from a central depot.

(4) *Services*. Services already provided for the community can be made more effective if (a) brought to the community through the centre, or (b) supplied in response to a request through the centre.

(5) *Co-ordination*. Co-ordination of all the educational or cultural services available is a necessary part of any adult educational plan. This can be assured (i) by setting up a national agency with the staff to handle co-ordination at the national level, (ii) by a body charged with the duty of co-ordinating services at the district level, and (iii) by the local centre. There is special need for co-ordination between the adult education agencies and the NBS.

(6) *Adult Education of the Maori*. Both within the framework of the normal educational machinery, and by the addition of specific means if necessary, effort should be made to meet the needs of the Maori people. These needs differ in some respects from those of the pakeha.

(7) *Residential Institutions.* Facilities should be made readily available for holding week-end, short-term, or more prolonged schools, particularly for country people, who cannot readily avail themselves of the normal channels of adult education. Hostels of post-primary schools should be used for this purpose, wherever possible. Residential adult schools may be necessary in the future.

(8) *Adolescent Education.* (a) Adult education will be really effective only when there is adequate provision for the continued education of youth through a system of 'tapered' continuation education.

(b) Any scheme for continued training for the armed forces after the war should, as an integral part of its functioning, include an educational programme.

(c) Similar provision for education should be included in any period of national service instituted in lieu of (b).

(9) *Fields of Interest.* Adult education will necessarily continue to offer the services at present offered, but these must not be thought of as covering more than a small portion of adult needs. In all adult education the critical appraisal of the world in which the adult lives should be encouraged.

(10) *Policy.* There is need for a clearly stated, flexible, and practical policy for the encouragement of adult education, but placing responsibility on (i) national State-owned agencies to co-operate (as part of their duty) with the agencies of adult education; (ii) local authorities, who should be encouraged to assist in providing funds.

CHAPTER XII

Organization and Administration

* ————— *

ANY attempt to meet the educational needs of adults in New Zealand, so far as they can be met through organization, involves one sooner or later in certain difficulties arising from the structure of the machinery set up to control education in this country. The public system of education comes ultimately under the direction of the central Department of Education. Below the level of the Department, education is controlled by a host of *ad hoc* bodies, each having jurisdiction over a different sphere of education, or over a geographical area which only by accident coincides either with an area of local government or with an area served by one of the other educational bodies. Primary education, organized in nine districts, is administered by education boards; secondary schools, as distinct from district high schools, come under the supervision of special boards which may control one or more schools; technical high schools, which also provide advanced technical instruction, are presided over by a third set of *ad hoc* bodies. A description in more detail of the functions of these three sets of bodies reads like a problem in a textbook of elementary logic; for not all secondary schools come under special boards, education boards control some technical education, and some secondary boards control technical

education. The main conclusion to be drawn from these rather odd premisses is this: no single authority at the local level controls all branches of education in any one area. The result has been that, as new educational needs have become manifest, they have been met not by additions to the functions of already existing bodies, but by the creation of a new set of *ad hoc* bodies. Thus, the recreational needs of the adolescent are being met through a branch of the Department of Internal Affairs and a series of special committees at the local level; non-vocational adult education is co-ordinated by a central Council and four *ad hoc* bodies closely connected with the university colleges. Complete district planning for all the educational needs of the community is not possible under this system, the shortcomings of which are especially evident when new needs arise. Extended provision for continued part-time education of adolescents is urgently required; additional facilities for the pre-school child are much in demand; but there exists no single body capable of dealing with either of these needs. It is difficult to see how adequate coverage can be assured in all branches of education without a courageous reorganization of the machinery of administration. The word 'courageous' is used advisedly, for the reception given to many of the suggestions that have been made in the past for the rationalization of the system has been far from cordial. Any move in this direction is likely to be construed as being both an attempt to increase the power of the Department and an insult to existing committees that have established a proprietary right to their present position.¹ It seems clear, also, that the present structure of local government—county, borough, and city councils—is so illogical that to attempt to make them the basis of educational

¹ Studies of the control of education in New Zealand have been made by Webb, Leicester. *Control of Education in New Zealand* (Wellington 1937); and Kandel, I. L. *Types of Administration* (Wellington 1938). A scheme for re-organization was set out in the Report of the Parliamentary Recess Education Committee (1930).

organization would be disastrous. Local rating for educational purposes is so foreign to the New Zealand tradition that it is bound to prove unpopular in most areas; the financial situation of some local bodies is so precarious that to require them to provide funds for education would be impracticable. Without financial responsibility the organization of local government can have little to commend it as a framework into which to fit the administration of education.

One of the great advantages of the English system of local education authorities is that it involves the appointment of a skilled administrator—director or education officer—in each district. It has been claimed that this advantage could be achieved by setting up district divisions of the Education Department—a form of organization similar to that which works well in such Departments as the Railways and the Post and Telegraph Departments. The parallel does not, of course, hold, and takes no account of the differences that exist between the work of either of these Departments and the supervision of schools. The objection that such a plan would result in an increase in the power of the central Department is probably valid, and it would certainly not solve the problem of ‘using the administrative resources and co-ordinating power of the central government and at the same time curbing the central government’s inherent love of uniformities’.² Nevertheless, the whole question of the extent to which education should be controlled by lay members of the public, as distinct from professional administrators, is one on which there is at present a great deal of loose thinking.

It is not proposed to discuss further the general organization of education. If, however, any system of local education authorities providing for the general oversight of all educational functions were devised, adult education should, in the opinion of the present writer, be co-ordinated at the local level by a special committee set up by (but not composed

² Webb, *op. cit.*, 7.

entirely of members of) the local administrative body. At the same time, the need for major reconstruction of the system should not be made an excuse for delay in the urgently required extension of adult education. The scheme of administration suggested in this chapter could fairly readily be incorporated in a new administrative plan.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

What, then, are the general principles on which a sound system of organization and administration of adult education should be based?

- (1) The system should be very flexible. Experiment is the life-blood of adult education, since the needs of the local community have to be discovered, and cannot be determined in advance. The very nature of adult education (as something entered upon voluntarily by grown men and women), and the varying geographical, social, and occupational backgrounds of communities in this country, alike decree that no one cut-and-dried plan or type of provision can be expected to satisfy all needs. Adult education of many different kinds should be provided. Needs should be met, too, where and when they occur, though not in any indiscriminate fashion; to meet them it should not be necessary to enter upon protracted negotiation with some central body.
- (2) Unnecessary duplication should be avoided, not simply on the score of economy, but also on social grounds, to prevent the further segmentation of society. Hitherto, there have been so few workers in a vast field that duplication, though occurring³ at times, has not been of serious dimensions. As has been pointed out in a previous chapter, some danger of duplication is implied in the existing relations

³ At least a few students enrolled in WEA classes might have been better served by evening classes conducted under the Regulations for Manual and Technical Classes, though not all adults would take kindly to the methods of enrolment adopted in some technical colleges, or to the mixed age-groups found in some of the classes.

between the Physical Welfare and Recreation Branch of the Department of Internal Affairs, and the other branches of adult education.

(3) Connected with the principle of flexibility is what may be called the principle of 'administrative economy': there should be done at the national level only what cannot be better done at the local or district level. This principle should act as a guide in determining what services should be provided nationally. Local interest is vital if adult education is to act as an integrating force in the local community.

(4) Co-ordination of already existing services should be encouraged in every possible way. Machinery should be devised to enable significant educational work performed either by voluntary agencies or by State services to reach the community. When a demand is found, it should be possible to supply it either by inviting an already existing agency to undertake an additional task, or by supplying the need direct.

(5) There is, too, the principle of consumer representation. The WEA as originally constituted gave expression to it, but does so less effectively today because the real consumer body (the adult students) is less adequately represented than the trade unions, whose interest in adult education is not of the direct kind that present conditions require. There are four advantages in providing some measure of student control: supply is kept in touch with demand; the sense of local responsibility is fostered; there is a healthy and continuous check on the nature of supply; and students themselves benefit from participation in democratic government. The mistake must not be made, however, of supposing that student control can provide the sole directing force in adult education, for the good reason that ability to supply a revealed demand may require a knowledge and skill that can come only from experience and special training. Students must, on occasion, be protected from plausible sophistry masquerading as real knowledge; the State must

be protected from a waste of public money from the same cause. Opinions may differ as to the point at which consumer representation should be introduced into a scheme of administration. The view adopted here is that it can be most effective at the level of the class or the local group.

ULTIMATE RESPONSIBILITY

From what has been said in Chapter XI it should be obvious that adult education must be thought of in terms of the local community and its needs. For the sake of simplicity, in what follows, administration is described from central organization to local area; but this is not to be taken to mean that a central organization is thought of as dictating to local areas. The function of the machinery to be described is to make sure that the services required by the local community may be made readily available, and that public funds may be used with the greatest economy.

Voluntary agencies have played an important part in the history of adult education, and have received, particularly in recent years, increasing support from Government funds. There will always be a considerable volume of adult education that will be carried on by such bodies, and it is no part of administration to prevent their growth. On the contrary, where they are found to be doing valuable work, they should continue to receive assistance and encouragement. At the same time, the part played indirectly by the State has increased, and it is difficult to see how further progress can be made without a still larger contribution of funds and services from the central Government or from local bodies. (Since 1939 State expenditure on civilian adult education, exclusive of the cost of the two community centres, has been in the vicinity of £12,000 a year, and at least double that amount is immediately required to satisfy already existing needs.) The real problem is not to find an answer to the question whether the State should or should

not provide assistance, but to answer satisfactorily the two more important questions: (a) whether that assistance should be in the form of money grants or in the form of services readily made available to agencies of adult education, and (b) whether, in providing assistance, the State should seek a greater degree of direct control of adult education, or be content to delegate a large measure of control. As has already been stated, both funds and services are required, and the provision of further money grants is necessary if the services already provided are to be really effective. It is mainly the second question that must be considered in this chapter: the form that the administrative machinery should take. For the question of ultimate responsibility, in a country with the traditions of New Zealand, is largely of academic interest; even if the administration of funds be delegated to the University or to a specially constituted body, the ultimate responsibility rests with the State. For no democratic State can afford to neglect adult education. It remains, then, to determine whether adult education should, like other branches of the education service, come under the control of the Education Department, whether it should become an integral part of the work of the university colleges, or whether it should be administered through a separate, specially constituted body.

There is no simple solution to this problem. All three arrangements could be supported by good argument; all three have disadvantages. The really important matter is the quality of the work done, and it is possible to picture either the university colleges or the Department infused with sufficient imagination to enable adult education to expand without unnecessary restrictions. Both the colleges and the Department are already working in the field. The Department, in co-operation with local school authorities, conducts and supervises vocational and general classes for adults, and has already collaborated in the establishment of two community centres; in the Native schools, which it directly

controls, it has sponsored experiments in adult education for Maoris. The university colleges, through their long association with the WEA, and more recently through the place they occupy in the present machinery of general adult education, have an important body of experience.

On behalf of the university colleges it has often been argued with some justice that, being independent (if not in finance, at least in outlook), they can offer a greater degree of freedom than other educational bodies, and at the same time ensure a high standard of work and prevent flabbiness and sentimentality in adult education. On the whole the colleges have a creditable record so far as the protection of the rights of their staffs is concerned, and there are probably many tutors who would be loath to lose the freedom and status that association with the university colleges ensures. But the argument based on the preservation of standards of work requires further examination. If by the university colleges is meant the teaching bodies of the colleges, there can be no doubt about their fitness to preserve academic standards; that the governing bodies of the colleges, as at present constituted, are so directly concerned with standards is perhaps less evident. Moreover, the whole complexion of this argument is altered by the fact that expansion is likely to take place in fields where the criterion of academic standards no longer holds. When adult education was thought of in terms of three-year tutorial classes aspiring to the level of honours degree work, the university may have been a necessary guarantee of standards. It has more than once been pointed out in this study, however, that such advanced work has not existed in adult classes for many years, so that alliance with the university has not apparently been any guarantee of its existence. What the university colleges really do at present to 'preserve standards' they do by having the final voice in the appointment of tutors, and by setting up tutorial classes committees of which they appoint half the members.

So great has been the expansion of adult education in the last twenty years that many members of the professorial boards of the colleges, and still more of the members of the college councils, would be not a little surprised if they were suddenly faced with much of the work that is already being done. It may well be asked if the university is in a position to lay down or preserve standards in drama, folk-dancing, music, or art, or even in subjects more closely allied to the normal curriculum of the university. For even in the more academic subjects an adult class, because of the age, interests, and practical experience of its members, must be approached in a manner (and often with material) quite different from that appropriate to a group of university students. The preservation of standards rests, when everything has been said, with the conscience of the tutor. And the force of the university is most strongly felt in adult education through the contribution that can be made by those whom it has trained, and through the many kinds of specialized knowledge possessed by members of university staffs. To admit that adult education must have the services of university-trained people (among others) is not, however, to admit that their services can be most readily secured and most fruitfully employed only under a system of administration by university authorities as such. It may be remarked in passing that there is one branch of specialized adult education that only the university can undertake, and which (despite the recommendation of the Reichel-Tate Commission of nearly twenty years ago) is at present neglected—the teaching of extra-mural university students.

The creation of a department of adult education in each of the university colleges admittedly offers many attractions. There is ample overseas precedent for such a step, which has been more than once recommended in official reports. A department of adult education, to be successful, would need to be largely autonomous, and would therefore differ in character from the other teaching departments. As its chief

advantage, it would ensure that adult education came under the direction of a specially selected expert who, as head of a department, would be given a free hand in exploring his district and meeting revealed demands, and who could readily call on the assistance of other departments of the college. The disadvantages of this form of organization arise from the tradition and financial situation of the colleges. As has already been mentioned, the colleges are not adequately endowed institutions, able to make grants out of already existing funds, and unless a very much greater sum were to be devoted to adult education, the costs of four such departments would be out of all proportion to the advantages accruing from their establishment. (The salaries of four heads of departments, on the scale of recent university appointments, would take up at least a quarter of the present grant.) Even supposing finance were readily available, the volume of work likely to develop in a department of adult education would be very great indeed, and it is by no means unlikely that, in another twenty or thirty years, the staff required would equal in number the combined staffs at present employed in other teaching faculties. To expect the colleges to welcome and encourage this addition, when almost all the existing departments are understaffed, is to exaggerate the unselfishness of human nature and to jeopardize development by placing the claims of adult education in constant competition with the claims of other university departments. Proposals for extension would, in such circumstances, be subject to a very close scrutiny, and that by college councils whose members are not selected for their knowledge of the problems of adult education.* Ideally, the university colleges should welcome the task of providing adult education for all within their districts. The probability is of a different order. By taking their full share in adult education the colleges would have much to gain; they might

* See page 186 above. It may be added that a proposal to establish a department of adult education in one of the colleges was defeated some years ago, largely because of opposition on the part of the professorial board.

become fully recognized as the real cultural centres of their districts, and strengthen their claims to be organs of community; but the gain could be achieved only by a liberal and enlightened approach to the task, and a willingness to extend activity into all levels of adult education. Unless they are prepared to undertake such an extension of function, the colleges cannot claim to be the major directing forces in all adult education, and the setting up of special departments within the colleges would be largely an unwarranted expense. At the same time, the colleges should play a full part in the education of that small but important group of adults for whom the rigours of academic study make an appeal. There is a case, also, for giving them some representation on any special body set up to co-ordinate adult education.

Any move to place the central administration of adult education directly in the hands of the Education Department would meet with little favour. No one who was present at the Ministerial Conference on Education (1944) could have failed to note the emphasis placed on the need for decentralized control of the various services discussed, and there can be little doubt that public opinion is reflected in the outline of official policy prepared for the Conference: The Government does not contemplate establishing a State system of adult education or placing existing agencies under a Government department. I am convinced that the State has an important part to play in adult education by providing certain services . . . that could not well be provided otherwise, but I am equally sure that the State should not try to circumscribe those organizations that it helps beyond assuring itself that they are able and willing to use to full effect the services it provides.⁵

The case against giving the Education Department a larger voice in the control of adult education is often based on a suspicion of centralization which, it is supposed, involves rigid regulation, uniformity, and lifeless administration. It

⁵ Mason, H. G. R. *Education Today and Tomorrow*. Wellington 1944.

may be pointed out, however, that centralization does not necessarily involve these evils, and that a central administration, as some country teachers have discovered, may be more liberal than a local committee dominated by an active pressure-group. A remark of Sir Fred Clarke's is not out of place here:

Educational discussion would be spared much aimless futility if a final quietus could be given to the illusion that there is an inherent superiority in either a centralised or a localised system, regarded purely from the standpoint of its form.⁶

A much stronger argument, and one that has a special bearing on adult education, arises from the deeply-grounded fear that freedom may be limited through the misuse of political power; for it is ironically true that what many people in a democracy appear most to dread is the use for political ends of the power placed in the hands of their elected representatives. Freedom of discussion, it must be admitted, is the essence of a large part of adult education, and the example of the National Broadcasting Service, and even of some branches of the teaching service in former years, leads one to doubt the wisdom of placing adult education under the direct control of a Government department. At this point one comes up against the basic problem of the control of education, as defined by Webb:

It is the problem of admitting the nation state to its preponderating share in the control of education and at the same time keeping at a distance those who, from time to time, identify themselves with the state and profess to act in its name. It is the problem, perhaps, of persuading the nation state to support education without requiring education to support it slavishly in return.⁷

The story of the depression, which has been set out elsewhere, shows that adult education is particularly liable to be affected by sudden reversals in the economic position of the

⁶ 'Education in the British Dominions—Canada and South Africa', *The Year Book of Education*, 514. London 1933.

⁷ *Op. cit.*, 7.

country, and it is well that there should be national, district, and local committees to act as 'shock absorbers' to prevent hasty action that might well lead to the wiping out overnight of the whole service. Even more important is the need for ensuring that students and tutors shall not be debarred from the investigation of problems that might be classed as controversial. The need for protection in this matter is greater in the field of adult education than elsewhere, simply because adult education is, or should be, the education of adults, to whom the right of being controversial cannot logically be denied. This is a very different thing from making adult education the stamping ground for every propagandist. There is need, then, for some responsible body to guarantee that controversial subjects will be discussed in a spirit of honest inquiry, and that, provided this condition is fulfilled, the discussion of controversial subjects shall not be forbidden.

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL

On balance, and particularly until the major problem of educational organization is solved, it would seem best to provide for the continuance of a relatively independent National Council of Adult Education (NCAE) 'with the following functions:

- (1) To make recommendations to the Minister, and to receive and apportion the annual Government grant for adult education.
- (2) To lay down the broad framework of policy concerning adult education.
- (3) To ensure a close liaison with the various national services and departments of the Government having facilities that may be made available to agencies of adult education.
- (4) To provide (or arrange for the provision of) services that cannot be effectively or economically provided at the local or district level and that are not already provided nationally.
- (5) To act as a clearing-house of information concerning developments in adult education both in New Zealand and in other countries.

- (6) To offer advice to district authorities.
- (7) To receive annual and special reports from district authorities and to collate these into national reports for distribution to these authorities and to other bodies concerned with adult education.
- (8) To arrange for conferences (a) of directors, (b) of district representatives, and (c) of tutors, for the discussion of common problems.
- (9) To co-operate with the district authorities in arranging for the training of tutors.
- (10) To require district authorities to submit plans for the development of adult education in their areas.
- (11) To draw up a scale of minimum salaries and conditions of appointment for full-time tutors and wardens of community centres.

The Council is not envisaged as a strongly directing body, certainly not in matters of detail; it is hoped that initiative will rest mainly with the districts and eventually with even smaller units. At the same time, it must be more than purely advisory and, while subject to the over-riding financial authority of the Minister, must be given freedom to operate within defined limits. Of the functions outlined a few call for special comment. The services to be provided by the Council might eventually include the issuing of discussion or correspondence courses and series of bulletins (similar in format, though not necessarily similar in content to those issued by AEWS), all of which can be provided more attractively and economically by a national organization than by a smaller administrative unit. Certain specialist tutors working for part of a year in two or more districts might also profitably work under the direction of the NCAE when not seconded to districts. Particularly important will be conferences of district directors, who, though responsible to district authorities, might well constitute an expert committee to advise the Council on technical matters. The Council, it will be noted, is given power to require districts to submit plans. It is intended that such schemes for development, when approved, should form the basis of declared

policy to be followed over a period of years. In this way the present lack of continuity of policy could be avoided. The last function, that of drawing up a national salary scale, is designed to protect tutors, and to ensure that the quality of work does not deteriorate through the temptation to employ unsuitable people at a low rate of salary.

It will not be possible for the NCAE to perform its functions without the services of a full-time officer whose main duties should be to keep the Council informed of developments, to make reports to the Council when necessary, to act as permanent secretary to the Council, and to carry out the detailed tasks implied in the preceding paragraphs. The secretary of the NCAE should have status at least equal to that of the district directors. In constant touch with the headquarters of the various supply services and of the districts, he will be the technical advisor of the Council. The lack of such an officer is one of the greatest weaknesses of the present organization, and it is significant that the Senate of the University at a meeting in 1944 recommended that authority be given to the Council to appoint 'such executive officers as it thinks fit'. The value of a headquarters staff of specialists has been amply demonstrated in AEWS, and the need for such a staff may arise as adult education develops. Any such development, however, should not be made at the expense of more urgent local needs.

The constitution of the Council, as at present established, requires modification. The Education Department, the National Broadcasting Service, the Country Library Service, and the Senate of the University all have claims for representation that hardly need elaboration. If the Physical Welfare and Recreation Branch of the Department of Internal Affairs be not absorbed in the Education Department, it, too, should be represented on the Council.⁸ Despite

⁸ The absorption of this body is, in the opinion of the present writer, necessary before it has time to create too much confusion in the field of adult education.

the reasons advanced by the Senate Committee for avoiding district representation, experience has shown that there are better and more urgent reasons for including in the Council representatives of the bodies administering adult education in the four districts.⁹ If the claims of the districts be granted, the Council would be constituted as follows: three *ex officio* members—the Director of Education (or his nominee), the Director of Broadcasting (or his nominee), and the Director of the Country Library Service (or his nominee); one member appointed by the Senate of the University; and two representatives from each of the four districts. This would give a Council of twelve members. The number is larger than many would desire, but the NCAE should not be required to meet very frequently, and it is important that it should represent interests other than those of the central administration. One of the two seats allotted to each district should fall vacant each year, so that only in exceptional circumstances would a district have two new representatives on the Council. District representatives retiring on completion of their two years of service would, of course, be eligible for re-appointment. In this way continuity of policy should be assured. The WEA, it will be noticed, is not represented on the proposed Council. Some reasons for this omission have already been outlined. Here it may be added that the work of the WEA is largely carried out at the district level and that, since the districts are now represented on the Council, the case for its inclusion would appear to be even weaker than before.

The Council should have power to set up sub-committees to advise it on special branches of adult education, and, indeed, the setting up of such sub-committees should be regarded as one of the most important means which it will adopt to carry out its functions. Such sub-committees need not necessarily consist wholly of members of the Council,

⁹ See pp. 149, 180. It may be noted, too, that the appointment of district representatives (i.e. representatives of the college councils) has been recommended by the Senate. (See *Minutes of Senate*, 1944.)

and should include the Council's secretary as an *ex officio* member. Each of the Government departments whose services are likely to be of value in adult education should be required to appoint from its headquarters staff a liaison officer to form a permanent connecting link between his department and the Council. The conferences of tutors and of directors, to which reference has already been made, are also important means of keeping the Council informed of needs.

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION

Organization at the district level presents two main problems—(a) the functions of the body to be entrusted with the oversight of adult education in the district, and (b) the composition and method of appointment of that body. These two problems, though to some extent interlocked, can with advantage be considered separately.

The committee responsible for organization and administration in the district requires, in the opinion of the present writer, much more than purely advisory powers, and at the same time needs to be linked with the NCAE. Each district requires a 'servicing' organization that can not only supply existing demands, but discover new needs and satisfy them when revealed. Voluntary agencies are important, but needs often arise where there is no voluntary agency to supply them. Local interest, too, must be awakened, but there is little point in finding needs if they cannot be satisfied. There are many adults who have need of 'education' but who do not wish to become members of any association in order to receive the assistance they require. Further, prospective adult students seldom know in advance exactly what they want; they much more often buy, as it were, from samples. In each district, then, there must be a body of tutors (using the term in the comprehensive sense given to it in a previous chapter) and a supply of services that can be offered to local areas either by the district organization or by some

national body of which the district organization may act as distributing or publicity agent. For both voluntary agencies and local groups may be best assisted by services, and it may be just as wasteful to try to satisfy needs of voluntary agencies simply by financial assistance as it would be today to meet the needs of country libraries by a system of subsidies. Behind this body of tutors (residential, travelling, and specialist) and the services that the district has to offer, there must be some committee or council charged with the general oversight of the work, capable of making decisions on matters of policy, and able to budget for the needs of the whole area. To emphasize the true function of this body and the responsibility which it must undertake, it should be given the title of District Council of Adult Education.

The functions of the District Council of Adult Education (DCAE), then, should be:

- (1) To allocate to the various branches of adult education the funds made available to the district through the National Council of Adult Education.
- (2) To co-ordinate the adult educational activities in the district.
- (3) To stimulate an interest in adult education, and to supply (or arrange for the supply of) adult educational facilities not otherwise provided in the district.
- (4) To provide (or arrange for the provision of) tutors, instructors, or lecturers for groups organized by voluntary agencies, or by the District Council.
- (5) To arrange for the training of tutors in courses which the Council may itself organize, or which may be organized by agreement with the NCAE or with other bodies.
- (6) To appoint tutors, to have the general oversight of the work of tutors allocated to the district, and to arrange for the allocation of tutors to local areas.
- (7) To act as the distributing agent for national services (e.g. study courses) that may be available for adult education.
- (8) To have oversight of the district depot from which material (e.g. filmstrips, films, gramophone records, and teaching aids) may be made available to local areas.

(9) To report at least annually to the National Council of Adult Education.

(10) To appoint representatives to the National Council of Adult Education.

The proposed District Council differs in several ways from the local advisory committees at present in existence. In particular, it has more direct responsibility for the work it undertakes, and has direct control of the funds allocated for distribution in the district. It has the right of appointing staff, and has direct representation on the NCAE. At the same time it is not intended that it should become the only agency of adult education in the district; a large part of its work will consist of deciding which is the most appropriate agency to meet new needs, and it will offer aid to voluntary agencies. In performing the latter task, however, assistance will be given more frequently by supplying tutors and services than by making financial grants. It will be, in short, the servicing agent for worthy groups in its area. As time goes on, the DCAE may find it desirable to draw up a list of approved part-time tutors or instructors from which voluntary agencies or groups could be free to make a selection.

In performing its functions the DCAE should have the services of a full-time Director of Adult Education, who should be the chief executive officer of the Council, and should act as its secretary. Subject to the authority of the DCAE he should be responsible for the general organization of tutors and services provided or distributed through the Council. He will be the technical expert reporting to the Council and keeping it informed of developments and needs.

Full-time tutors engaged in the district should be employed by the DCAE after consultation with relevant sub-committees or local committees. This should provide sufficient guarantee of the qualifications of the tutors, who, being servants of the Council, could be transferred to different parts of the district as required. There should be no

difficulty in preserving the superannuation rights of tutors through the Teachers' Superannuation Fund. Security of tenure will be an important factor in ensuring that fully qualified people will be available for appointment, and here the minimum requirements laid down by the National Council will be important. Perhaps the most important reasons for placing the tutors under the control of the DCAE, rather than under a local committee, are to ensure their most economical and efficient use, and to prevent them from becoming 'stale' in any one smaller area.

The second problem—that of determining the composition and method of appointment of the District Council that is to carry out the functions already mentioned—is not easily solved. Apart from the lack of any comprehensive local educational authority (to which attention has already been drawn), there is the additional difficulty that adult education has not yet developed (in most of the present districts) to a point where the District Council can be elected by local units. In the present pioneering stage of development there is little to be gained by giving representation to local areas in which only a small amount of work is being done.

To carry out the functions that have been allotted to it, any District Council must satisfy three essential conditions: (1) it should be able to plan for the needs of an area sufficiently large to ensure economy, and should be free to experiment in ways of meeting those needs; (2) it should have close liaison with the various services available in its area; (3) it should be in a position to weigh claims for assistance made by different agencies. The present university college districts are not ideal administrative areas and may, in the course of time, require modification either by the constitution of new districts, or by the provision of machinery giving a larger amount of autonomy to sub-districts. For the present, however, because the university districts have already been treated as separate territories for the organiz-

ation of adult education, and because they are sufficiently large to prevent extravagant overlapping of services supported by public funds, there is much to be said for retaining them as units.

The present local advisory committee in each district is set up by the university college council and makes recommendations to that body, which employs most of the tutors available for general adult education. Some may be prepared to leave this position as it is. But the problem, as it appears to the present writer, is this: either the university colleges must be prepared to extend their educational work into a field much wider than that at present covered, or they must hand over the control of the body of adult tutors to some organization that can handle and encourage the increased volume of work that is likely to develop. Largely for reasons already stated, the author favours the second alternative, and suggests that the initiative pass progressively to a District Council of Adult Education constituted on a broader basis than that devised for the present local advisory committees, and having a much greater degree of direct responsibility for the work it undertakes. Ideally (one may be pardoned for repeating) the responsibility of appointing such a body would rest in large part with a comprehensive district education authority, which would be in a position to appoint members from local areas and local committees. It is admitted quite frankly that the constitution to be outlined below is not ideal, but it does provide for a Council able to give undivided attention to problems of adult education and, within limits of finance, capable of finding and satisfying needs. Further, it is believed that the proposed DCAE makes possible a very necessary liaison with other branches of education.

The proposed District Council, then, is not a large body, and consists basically of members appointed by the chief supplying agencies whose services are likely to be useful. Its constitution provides also for the inclusion of members who

have a special knowledge of problems of administration, who have had experience in organizing adult education, and who are in touch with voluntary agencies. But the cardinal principle in making appointments should be that members of the Council are not primarily representatives (and not necessarily members) of the electing bodies, but experts whose special knowledge and experience fit them to handle problems of administration and to undertake the general oversight of organization. In determining the desirable composition of such a body it is necessary also to keep in mind the wide variety of adult education that is to be undertaken in any adequate scheme: the Council will not be a body concerned solely, or even mainly, with 'tutorial classes'; it must deal with a diversified and expanding demand. Apart from the full-time tutors employed directly by the Council, and those employed by national agencies with whom the Council will work in close collaboration, there will be needed many part-time tutors, the most important sources of which will be, for some time at least, the staffs of the university colleges, teachers in rural and urban areas (who should be used to a greater extent than at present), and teachers in the technical service. Much more use will have to be made of the Manual and Technical Regulations of the Department, which offer wide scope for the formation of classes, and the most effective way of using these Regulations may be through the existing machinery of the technical education service. Three bodies, then, appear to have claims for admission to the status of appointing bodies of the Council: the university colleges, the education boards, and the boards of managers of technical high schools. The university colleges have a lengthy experience of certain types of adult education, and among the members of their staffs and of their governing bodies are many who have had experience both as lecturers and administrators in the field of adult education. The education boards are in a key position to know the qualifications of teachers in their districts, and appointments may have to be

made with an eye to the development of adult education. Five out of the nine boards are at present conducting some adult classes. A link with the boards is also desirable because at least some rural schools, and possibly some schools in the towns, should be planned with the needs of adult education in mind. A member appointed by the board of managers of a large technical high school (and the appointee might reasonably be a senior member of the staff) should have a sound knowledge of what the present regulations permit, and should form a link with any proposed extension of technical education. Since adult education will require liaison at various points with the Education Department, there is probably a very good case (particularly if the functions of the Physical Welfare and Recreation Branch of the Department of Internal Affairs should be taken over by the Education Department) for the inclusion on the Council of a senior inspector of schools stationed in one of the education board districts within the area over which the proposed council operates.¹⁰ Whether the WEA should be given power to elect a member of the Council is a matter open to some debate. Logically, the functions of the WEA are so different from those of the other appointing bodies that there are grounds for exclusion. On the other hand, there is in the WEA a body of experience that may be considered valuable. There can be little doubt, however, that the voice which the Association can claim in the new District Council cannot be as great as that which it at present has in the composition of the local advisory committees. In few districts have the WEA district councils adequate representation of groups outside of the main centre, and the present shortcomings of their composition have been mentioned elsewhere. On

¹⁰ An obvious difficulty arises from the fact that the education board districts do not coincide with the districts over which the university colleges have jurisdiction. Thus Victoria College district includes areas over which at least five education boards operate. For this reason it is proposed that the senior inspector be nominated by the Director of Education, and that the means of appointing the representative of the education boards be determined separately for each of the four districts.

balance, therefore, the present writer is of opinion that there should be no statutory requirement for representation of the district council of the WEA.

The constitution of the DCAE so far outlined does not necessarily provide for members with a special knowledge of such branches of adult education as drama, art, music, women's interests, workers' education, nor for the inclusion of those who have what may be called the 'student point of view'. For this reason, and to provide also for the inclusion of people having a special knowledge of the administration of adult education, it is proposed that the Council be given power to co-opt four members. The principle of co-opting members is not usual in such bodies in New Zealand, but it is common with the Education Committees in England, and has been found in the past to work well in the organization of the WEA. Members so appointed might reasonably be chairmen of functioning sub-committees which the DCAE will set up on the recommendation either of voluntary agencies (or groups of voluntary agencies), or of local committees. In some districts, the district council of the WEA might be invited to nominate one member. For branches of adult education not already handled by voluntary agencies, the DCAE might well set up sub-committees of people capable of advising it on the best means of attempting the new tasks. As district organization develops, some at least of the co-opted members should be appointed on the recommendation of groups of local organizations. The scheme of co-opting members, then, gives flexibility to the DCAE, allows considerable variation to meet the needs of different districts, and embodies a plan that is virtually in operation in one of the districts at the present time. There is need for such variation. For example, in the case of Victoria and Canterbury districts there may be good grounds for including on the DCAE a member appointed by the governing body of the agricultural college of the district, particularly

since the two agricultural colleges appear to be committed to a policy of expansion in the field of rural education.

The District Council of Adult Education would, then, consist of the following: three members appointed by the university college council (but not necessarily members of that body), one member appointed by the education board (or boards) in the university district, a senior inspector of schools appointed by the Director of Education, a member appointed by one of the governing bodies of the technical high schools in the university centre (but not necessarily a member of that body), and four co-opted members. This would give a Council of ten members, which, particularly during the period of expansion, should prove a workable number. Members should be appointed or co-opted for two years and should be eligible for re-election. By allowing for a shortened initial term of appointment for four of the members (e.g. one university college appointee, one appointee of the other basic electing bodies, and two of the co-opted members) it is possible to have a Council in which, even supposing that all electing bodies failed to re-appoint their representatives (which is unlikely), the greatest possible number of new members in any one year would be six.

It will be noted that direct representation on the DCAE is not given to voluntary agencies. The advantages of such representation would, it is thought, best be obtained through the sub-committees which the Council will set up to advise it. In particular, sub-committees on tutorial classes, art, drama, music, vocational education, women's work, community centres, and (in some districts) Maori education, would provide a channel whereby the needs of voluntary agencies and student bodies could be made known. The Director should be an *ex officio* member of all sub-committees. Where the basic structure of the Council does not provide for an existing member capable of acting as chairman of a particular sub-committee, there may be good grounds for co-opting the chairman of a working sub-

committee as a member of the DCAE. Co-ordination will probably be much more effectively achieved by inviting voluntary agencies with similar interests to set up an advisory committee, than by giving direct representation to one of these bodies. Selected with care, the sub-committees would probably serve to keep the Council in close touch with areas outside the main centre¹¹. To ensure still further that the Council is kept informed of the needs of its area, district conferences should be called, perhaps biennially, at which representatives of community centre organizations, voluntary agencies in receipt of assistance in the form of services or grants, and local committees, could discuss the problems confronting them and could make suggestions for the improvement of the work. In the course of time, such conferences might be invited to nominate members for appointment to an enlarged DCAE.

LOCAL ORGANIZATION

The greatest possible freedom should be allowed at the local level, and it is not possible to lay down any one pattern for local organization. Groups may be formed by voluntary agencies, or by resident or travelling tutors, or in connection with community centres. They will naturally be democratically controlled, and may conveniently have their own committees and an elected group secretary. It will be no part of the work of the DCAE to dictate to them how they shall conduct their affairs, provided they satisfy certain requirements concerning the hours of meeting and the quality of the work done. It may be repeated that all the machinery that has so far been devised has two objects in view: to bring assistance to the local community, and to ensure economy in the use of public funds.

¹¹ Such a scheme has been worked out for the co-ordination of women's work in the Auckland district, the committee consisting of representatives of the WI, WD, National Council of Women, the Federation of University Women, and three co-opted members. This committee nominates two members for appointment to the local advisory committee.

(1) *Community Centres.* The principles involved in the organization of community centres have already been outlined, and need not be repeated here¹². Given a real local demand and the right kind of tutor, local areas should be given the greatest possible autonomy. At the same time, to be really effective community centres must have behind them the full resources of organized adult education. Unless they can readily call on services from outside the community, there is a very real danger that the quality and effectiveness of their work may deteriorate. The two State-supported community centres at present in existence are regarded as experimental, and embody slightly different forms of administration. The centre at Feilding is linked loosely with an agricultural high school; Risingholme is planned to have a considerable degree of autonomy. From experience gained in these experiments valuable lessons will no doubt be learned. The local committees of advice will vary from district to district, and in the detailed working of the centres the principle of autonomy is likely to be justified.

In each of the four main cities there should be an adult education centre which might well house, in addition to the facilities required for the city, the material for distribution to local centres. It should also be the administrative headquarters of the district. Adult education centres will differ in many ways from the community centres in country towns, but may well give scope for the development of a healthy student life, and may give rise to many student clubs and associations. The most effective machinery for their control will have to be discovered by experiment. It is, however, considered important that the staff of both the adult education centres in the cities and the community centres in rural areas should be appointed by the DCAE after consultation with the local committees or with the educational authority (in the case of tutors attached to schools).

¹² See pp. 299-306 above.

(2) *Areas Not Provided With Centres.* Not all areas will, at least in the immediate future, have community centres. They should, however, be provided with tutors posted to strategic points in the area by the District Council, and working under the direction of the district Director. Teachers in rural schools, selected and trained as previously suggested, should also come under the same organization for that part of their work approved as 'adult education', and should receive assistance from the nearest centre or resident tutor. Study material and discussion courses should be available through the district headquarters. Schools conveniently situated in certain areas might well be constituted as sub-centres, and linked fairly closely with a community centre. As occasion demands, too, tutors from the district staff should be posted for a specified time to a community centre, when they would come under the direction of the permanent tutor at the centre.

FINANCE

It is obvious that the complete scheme outlined in this and the preceding chapter will require the expenditure of large sums of money, and unless a considerable increase is made in the annual grant, reorganization cannot be expected to produce results. Just how far short of the necessary expenditure on adult education the present grant of £12,000 really is may be illustrated by considering existing needs. At the present rate of expansion, and without extravagance, the two northern districts could probably each use within five years a director, office staff, nine resident tutors, perhaps ten specialist travelling tutors for women's work, arts and crafts, music, drama, and the more 'academic' subjects. When to these requirements are added the cost of travelling, the minimum of teaching equipment, and the fees for part-time tutors, the annual cost would amount to about £20,000. Allowing for the smaller population of the two southern

areas, the total for the Dominion would be about £70,000 a year. It should be noted that no allowance is made in this estimate for community centres (which would probably cost about £750 each a year) or for any extensive capital expenditure. To reach the sum mentioned in the period of five years, the present grant would need to be doubled in the first year, and thereafter increased by £12,000 in each of the remaining four years. The budget for one district for 1945, worked out so as to meet already existing demands, shows a rise almost exactly in the proportion indicated. Whatever the size of the grant, however, the machinery of administration should not be allowed to absorb an undue proportion of the money available. Salaries of full-time and part-time staff will be the largest recurring expenditure, but so great is the need for buildings and equipment that the most important item in the budget for some years to come will fall under the heading of capital expenditure. There should be provision for capital expenditure in the grants made. The cost of community centres must be borne in part by the local community, and in part by the central Government. Indeed, a community centre should not be established until the local community has demonstrated that it is prepared to find part of the initial cost. Centres for which Government assistance is contemplated should be established only after consultation with the DCAE, but it would seem unnecessary to involve the Council in all the details of the initial financing of the project; the Department of Education and the Public Works Department already possess the necessary machinery for approving plans and specifications, and for supervising construction. At the same time the National Council of Adult Education might well draw up certain minimum requirements to be met by approved community centres.

Whether local authorities should contribute to the current expenses of adult education is a matter of policy that cannot be argued here. It is, however, probable that, if community centres prove their value, the local bodies may be willing

to meet the cost of the upkeep of the building. Some local bodies, too, may be prepared to provide part of the cost of experimental work in local areas.

The funds of the DCAE will be derived mainly from the National Council and from fees paid by students enrolled in classes conducted directly by the DCAE. Distinction between capital and current expenditure should be clearly drawn by the National Council in making its grants to the districts. It has already been suggested that the District Councils should be required to budget for their needs over a period of years and to work on the assumption that expenditure planned in accordance with an approved scheme will be more or less automatically met in future budgets¹³. At present the local advisory committees have to work very much in the dark, and cannot plan for any great distance ahead.

While no system of adult education regulations similar to those drawn up by the Board of Education (England) has been advocated, the National Council of Adult Education may find it necessary to distinguish between different classes of work. It would be extremely difficult to devise a scheme of capitation grants that would be entirely satisfactory, particularly in a country where density of population and facilities for transport vary from district to district. It is not easy to determine, for example, whether a class of twenty in a city area is more valuable than a class of half that number in a remote rural area. There is probably a good case for an enlargement of the scope of the Manual and Technical Regulations, which, as has already been pointed out, could with advantage be used more extensively even in their present form. Rigid regulations, however, are

¹³ Under the present method of financing adult education progressive development is almost impossible. In November or December of each year, the Council of Adult Education considers the budgets of the four districts. When it is ready to make its recommendations to the Minister, the Government's Financial Estimates for the succeeding year are usually completed, so that additional funds cannot readily be made available. It would seem that a relatively simple rearrangement of times of meeting should overcome this difficulty.

more likely to hinder than assist adult education in its present stage of development, and for some time, at least, the checks provided in the suggested machinery of administration should prove sufficient to avoid waste of public money.

STUDENT REPRESENTATION

In the plan of administration suggested, student representation, while not introduced directly into the constitution of the District Councils, is allowed plenty of scope at the point where it may be most effective. Every community centre, every adult education centre, and every area which has a resident tutor, should possess a strong student committee charged with the duty of assisting in the discovery of needs, making recommendations to the DCAE, electing representatives to district conferences, and, through whatever voluntary associations are assisted by the Council, nominating members of the sub-committees that the DCAE will set up. Study groups will naturally have a large degree of autonomy. The tutor stationed at a community centre will need an advisory committee which may well consist of students and representatives of local organizations financially interested in the centre. Such advisory committees will vary according to the nature of the community and the kind of local control devised for the centre. Apart from such formal provision for self-government, there should be in each local centre ample scope for students to exercise initiative and responsibility in those groups in which they are particularly interested. It should be remembered that much of the work of the DCAE will consist of providing services to groups which already have common interests, and which may be left to work out their own system of internal government. The requirement of any specially devised and rigid system of student representation here would be unlikely to achieve any good purpose. The employees and management of a factory, for example, might conceivably form a joint committee to

arrange for classes to be supplied with tutors from the DCAE; but to compel them to do so, as a condition of receiving assistance, would be undesirable. Within very wide limits it should be possible for any group, able to guarantee a certain minimum number of students willing to meet certain fundamental requirements as to regularity of attendance over a specified number of classes, and willingness to carry out serious work, to receive assistance, just as it should be possible for any individual to receive advice and to obtain help in satisfying his needs.

It is not always realized, however, that adult students do not, simply because they are students, necessarily have a great deal in common, and that they do not always wish to become members of a 'movement' in order to satisfy their needs. If they like what they get, they come; if they are not satisfied, they stay away, and no amount of student representation is likely to alter their attitude. There are probably many such students (and very good students, too) in the WEA classes today, and the student who offers his services as class representative on the council of the WEA does not necessarily represent the views of his classmates. It often takes several weeks for a class to develop any feeling of cohesion, or to have any real point of view. Where general meetings of students attending classes have been held, they have often given rise to valuable suggestions, however, and there should always be such a channel of communication.

The suggested organization, which, it may be repeated, has for its object the servicing of the local community, is summarized in Figure VII on p. 352. Reference to the diagram will show that the University and the university colleges enter only indirectly into the machinery of administration. Liaison will doubtless be provided with the university college staffs who will continue to provide some of the part-time tutors. The colleges may well be represented on certain of the sub-committees. Access to college libraries and to the

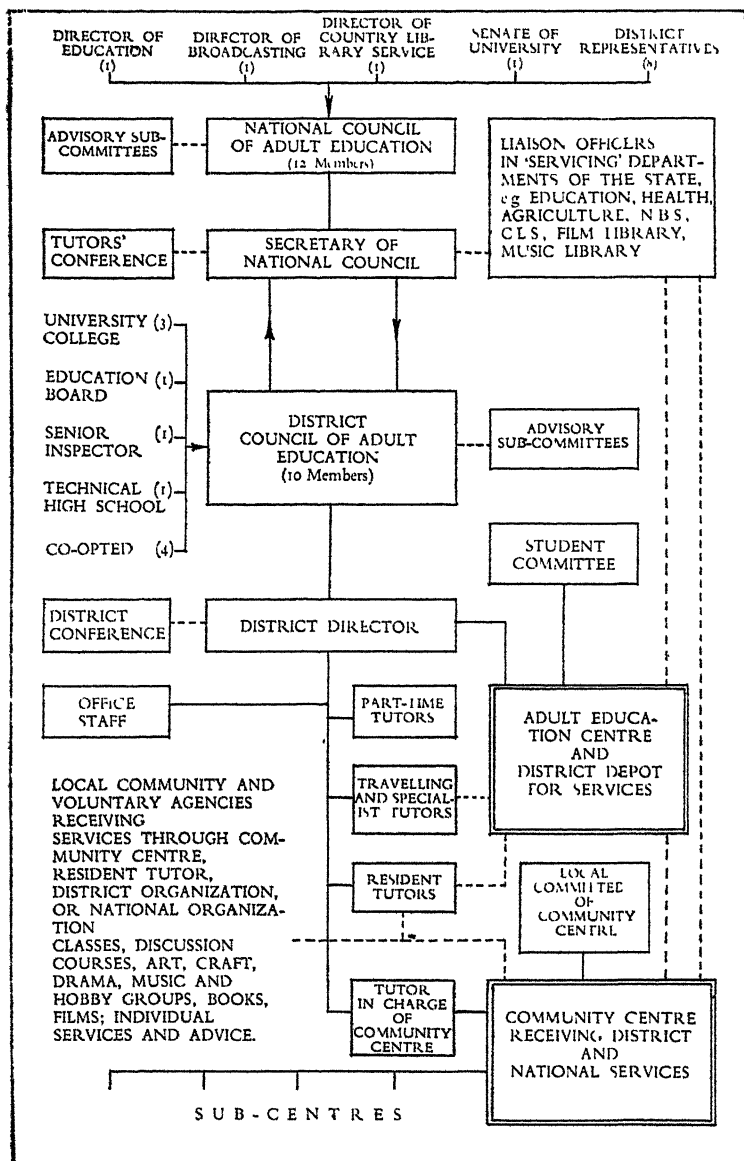


Fig. VII Proposed Organization of Adult Education

research departments of the colleges may be provided for tutors by mutual arrangement. The colleges will also enter into certain parts of any scheme for the training of tutors.

THE PLACE OF THE WEA

The WEA, as such, is given a less prominent part in the proposed scheme, for the reason that its present position in administration is anomalous, and prevents a true perspective from being given to adult work. It is to be expected that much of the country work of the WEA will be undertaken by tutors supplied by the District Council of Adult Education to work in association with local committees set up to organize groups. Classes organized by the WEA can still be supplied with tutors under the proposed scheme, and reasonable expenses incurred in organizing may be met in much the same way as at present. On the other hand, the WEA may consider that the time has arrived for a revision of its constitution. It may become a voluntary association for the encouragement of adult education among all members of the community (which is what it really is at the present time); or it may decide to narrow its activities and to organize among working men and women classes which could be supplied with tutors by the DCAE. If it adopts the former policy, a change of name is much to be desired. If it adopts the latter course, it will still be performing a useful function; for the more groups there are to be served by the tutors of the DCAE, the better. What the present scheme implies is: (1) that the WEA cannot reasonably undertake the provision of adult education for all sections of the community in the city as well as in the country; (2) that it cannot, as at present constituted, control the proposed district centre; (3) that it should receive consideration in proportion to the classes that it organizes; (4) that it should bear the same relation to the District Council of Adult Education as any other voluntary body. There is nothing in the suggested

plan to smash or strangle the WEA. Its really vital contribution, the principle of the joint or tutorial classes committee, can still be preserved for such classes as are undertaking work of university level. Such a joint committee might well function in part as an advisory committee to the DCAE, and might reasonably nominate a member for co-optation by the DCAE. Whatever the position in other countries, the position in New Zealand is that the machinery of the joint committee is inappropriate for much of the work at present undertaken, or likely to be undertaken in the future.

TRANSITION

It may well be thought that some districts are not yet ready for the change of administration envisaged in this chapter, and, in any case, unless a considerable extension of adult work is contemplated, the need for a change may not be apparent. If, however, a 'five-year plan' of extension were laid down, the present system of administration could be readily modified in progressive stages, so that it would approximate to the pattern suggested here. In particular, if the recent proposal of the Senate that the college councils be represented on the Council of Adult Education be accepted, it is highly desirable, if not imperative, that the representative of the college council should be also a member of the local advisory committee. Then, too, the machinery of sub-committees suggested for the DCAE could readily be used by the present local advisory committees. (It is, in fact, already in partial operation in one district.) The college councils, with the transition in mind, might well consider it worth while to appoint to their local advisory committees some of the members suggested in the scheme proposed in this chapter. The college councils, too, would probably be well advised to give an increasing amount of autonomy to their local advisory committees, and to realize that, with the expansion of adult work, the problems involved are too

complex to be reviewed by a body not constantly in touch with developments. The stage at which full-time directors should be appointed is not easily determined, but the appointment of such district officers should be one of the main conditions of granting autonomy to the proposed DCAE. It will probably be found that, by the time a district is able to keep five permanent tutors fully occupied, a full-time director will become necessary.

At the national level, the appointment of an executive officer to the NCAE should not be delayed, and should be made as soon as the districts are given representation on the NCAE, or as soon as the national budget reaches, say, £20,000. Without his appointment the efficient functioning of even the already existing machinery is almost an impossibility. If the appointment is unduly delayed, there may be danger of waste, unnecessary duplication of services, and a continuation of local dissatisfaction. The existence of an executive officer would enable the NCAE to set up actively functioning sub-committees and to achieve in reality the co-ordinating functions that it at present nominally has.

P O S T S C R I P T

Administrative machinery, however tidy, cannot educate. At best it can remove obstacles and aid in producing the circumstances that make education possible. The circumstances favourable to adult education arise in a variety of ways: when tutor and student come together in the search for truth; when, in the spirit of honest inquiry, adults meet to discuss their problems and examine their opinions; when, in the course of their daily work, they catch sight of the larger social meaning of the tasks they perform; and when, collectively or individually, they find, in the satisfying and creative use of leisure, the secret of human as distinct from

animal existence. Adult education, in short, arises from temptations to the good life. There have been communities in the past where the good life was readily accessible to a privileged few. Paradoxically, in the present age when leisure is the right of all men and women, the contradictions of society are such that the good life has to be planned for. No part of postwar planning can be more important than that which has for its object the attainment of those values which give reality to the democratic way of living.

Appendices

I

LIST OF MECHANICS' INSTITUTES, ATHENAEUMS AND SIMILAR BODIES

GENERAL NOTE

THE following list of mechanics' institutes, athenaeums, and other bodies apparently having similar objects, is arranged so far as possible to indicate the probable date of foundation. For many of them accurate dates are not ascertainable, and when dates are available, they are liable to lead to difficulties because of the confusion of date of foundation, date of the erection of a building, and date of incorporation or registration. By no means all of the institutes were incorporated. There were undoubtedly many more such institutions, of which it has not been possible to trace records.

SOURCES

The early directories of New Zealand or of the individual provinces give lists of important institutions existing in the various settlements. Early newspapers report, sometimes at great length, the doings of many of the institutes. Under *The Public Libraries Powers Act*, 1875, and *The Libraries and Mechanics' Institutes Act*, 1908, any association desiring to receive library grants was required to file an application, together with two copies of its constitution and/or 'notice of intention to form', with the Supreme Court of the province (or district) in which

it was situated. Owing to the restrictions placed on the kinds of bodies that were eligible for grants, many of the institutes did not register, and some had already disappeared by the time the Acts were passed. The Provincial Ordinances (or Acts) refer to those institutes which were incorporated under provincial legislation, or to those which received specific grants of land from the Provincial Councils. The dates of registration or incorporation are not necessarily the dates of foundation, and there are cases where Ordinances were passed concerning an institute which did not materialize. Many of the bodies registering under the Acts never actually functioned. Through the kindness of the Registrars of the Supreme Courts it was possible to obtain lists of the bodies registering in all but two districts. In one case the early records had been destroyed by fire, and in another (Wellington) the pressure of work on the staff made it impossible for a search to be made for the documents. A few institutes are listed in *A. to J. H.-1 F*, 1878, but the list is not complete. Some institutes known to exist are not listed in any of these official records. The *Library Census*, 1938, gives the names of some of the institutes that had existed over a period of years.

Every effort has been made to fill out details obtained from the sources already mentioned. For instance, through the very great kindness of the Tauranga Library Committee, it was possible to read an almost complete set of minutes of the mechanics' institute which preceded the present library. A number of old residents of other towns, and some of the present librarians, were good enough to supply information. The writer's only regret is that time did not permit still further inquiries.

A perusal of the constitutions filed with 118 institutions applying for registration with the Supreme Court at Auckland shows that many of the bodies (particularly those registering at a later date) were libraries and nothing more, and that some were merely bodies formed in the hope of obtaining grants to enable them to establish libraries. The constitutions of others follow a stock pattern and include some or all of the following objects: promotion of useful (and entertaining) knowledge, arrangement of lectures, conducting a museum, arranging classes in languages and arts, and mutual instruction.

In the list which follows * indicates that the institution was scheduled in the *Library Census*, 1938, and † that it is known to have existed for a number of years. In many cases the actual date of foundation is earlier than that indicated here, because the institutes are (in the available sources) often recorded as 'existing' or 'having existed for some years'.

- 1840-49 †Nelson Literary Institute
 †Port Nicholson Mechanics' Institute, School, and Library
 †Auckland Mechanics' Institute
 †Richmond Mechanics' Institute
 †Wellington Athenaeum and Mechanics' Institute
- 1850-59 †Lyttelton Colonists' Society
 †Christchurch Mechanics' Institute
 †Dunedin Mechanics' Institute
 †Dunedin Athenaeum and Mechanics' Institute
 †Hawke's Bay Mechanics' Institute
 †Hutt Mechanics' Institute
 †Napier Athenaeum and Mechanics' Institute
- 1860-69 †Marlborough Literary Institute (Picton)
 †Timaru Mechanics' Institute
 †Blenheim Institute
 *†Oamaru Athenaeum and Mechanics' Institute
 Onehunga Institute
 †Oxford Mechanics' Institute
 †Waimate Mechanics' Institute
 Waiuku Literary Association
- 1870-79 †Thames Mechanics' Institute
 †Charleston Mechanics' Institute and Library
 Hampden Athenaeum
 †Invercargill Athenaeum
 †Tauranga Mechanics' Institute
 †Wanganui Mechanics' Institute
 †Tokatea Institute
 †Temuka Mechanics' Institute
 Cromwell Mechanics' Institute
 †Lawrence Athenaeum and Mechanics' Institute¹
 Rangiora Literary Institute
 *Riverton Athenaeum

- Tuapeka Athenaeum and Mining Institute¹
 Newmarket Literary Institute
 Roslyn Institute
 Christchurch Literary Institute
 †Hokitika Mechanics' Institute
 *Arrowtown Athenaeum
 †Port Chalmers Mechanics' Institute
 Taranaki Institute
 Wanganui Institute
 †Opotiki Mechanics' Institute
 St. Albans Mechanics' Institute
 Whangarei Literary Institute
 †Waiuku Institute
 Rodney Athenaeum
 Papakura Literary Institute
 Okaihau Mutual Improvement and Library Association
 1880-89 Driving Creek Institute
 *†Naseby Athenaeum
 *†Mercury Bay Athenaeum
 *†Clyde Athenaeum
 Okain's Athenaeum
 †Coromandel Institute
 †Kaukapakapa Public Hall and Athenaeum
 1890-99 Kaiapoi Institute
 *Featherston Literary Institute
 1900-10 *†Taihape Mechanics' Institute
 Kaponga Athenaeum
 †Te One Mechanics' Institute (Chatham Islands)
 *†Morven Athenaeum and Library
 1910-19 Ahuroa Public Hall and Athenaeum
 Big Omaha Mechanics' Institute
 Woodend Mechanics' Institute
 Kaitieke Institute
 Domett Hall and Mechanics' Institute
 Mataroa Mechanics' Institute
 Kaihere Athenaeum, Library, and Institute
 1920-29 Utiku Mechanics' Institute
 1930-39 Pukeokahu Mechanics' Institute
 Tiriraukawa Mechanics' Institute

¹ These two are possibly the same institution.

Miscellaneous. (The dates of the following institutes have not been definitely established, but the institutes have been referred to in the sources.)

- Beaumont Athenaeum
- *Calcium Mechanics' Institute, Isla Bank, Wallace
- *Campbelltown Athenaeum, Bluff
- Clinton Public Library and Mechanics' Institute
- Cust Literary Institute, Rangiora
- *Denniston Athenaeum
- *Kaitangata Athenaeum
- Kakanui Athenaeum
- Kurow Mechanics' Institute
- Macetown Athenaeum
- Makarau Public Hall and Athenaeum
- *Milton Athenaeum
- Otepopo Athenaeum and Public Library
- Palmerston Athenaeum
- Parakai Public Hall and Athenaeum
- *Pukerau Athenaeum and Library
- *Seddon Memorial Institute, Runanga
- *†Stirling Athenaeum
- Tapanui Athenaeum and Public Library
- *†Waiholā Athenaeum
- Waipu Library and Literary Association
- *Wairoa Mechanics' Institute
- *Waitahuna Athenaeum, Tuapeka
- *Winton Antheneum
- *Wyndham Athenaeum

II

TOTALS OF CLASSES AND ENROLMENTS, WEA, 1915-43

THE table presented here (Table XIII) has been compiled from the best available records of the WEA, and the material has been presented in graphical form in the text (see Fig. 1, p. 89). Statistics of the WEA have, from the point of view of the

research student, been poorly kept, and errors have occurred in the published returns. Where possible, these have been corrected and checked with other records. Originally the returns of the Association differentiated between tutorial classes proper and

TABLE XIII

NUMBER OF CLASSES OF ALL KINDS AND ENROLMENTS IN WEA
IN THE VARIOUS UNIVERSITY DISTRICTS, 1915-1943

| Year | Auckland | | Wellington | | Canterbury | | Otago | | Total | |
|------|----------|--------|------------|--------|------------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| | Classes | Studs. | Classes | Studs. | Classes | Studs. | Classes | Studs. | Classes | Studs. |
| 1915 | 8 | 164 | 4 | 120 | 3 | 71 | 3 | 74 | 18 | 429 |
| 1916 | 11 | 227 | 7 | 119 | 3 | 70 | 5 | 110 | 26 | 526 |
| 1917 | 10 | 246 | 8 | 209 | 4 | 82 | 4 | 118 | 26 | 655 |
| 1918 | 11 | 270 | 14 | 366 | 6 | 122 | 5 | 178 | 36 | 936 |
| 1919 | 13 | 364 | 14 | 401 | 10 | 250 | 8 | 238 | 45 | 1253 |
| 1920 | 9 | 160 | 21 | 639 | 12 | 343 | 14 | 354 | 56 | 1496 |
| 1921 | 9 | 184 | 22 | 631 | 21 | 726 | 15 | 613 | 67 | 2154 |
| 1922 | 14 | 363 | 16 | 604 | 21 | 753 | 24 | 732 | 75 | 2452 |
| 1923 | 19 | 797 | 23 | 698 | 27 | 1018 | 21 | 735 | 90 | 3248 |
| 1924 | 28 | 1674 | 23 | 921 | 23 | 885 | 23 | 779 | 97 | 4259 |
| 1925 | 36 | 2300 | 25 | 1205 | 22 | 908 | 30 | 874 | 113 | 5287 |
| 1926 | 31 | 1363 | 31 | 1996 | 31 | 1219 | 29 | 911 | 122 | 5489 |
| 1927 | 38 | 1708 | 31 | 2138 | 33 | 1235 | 31 | 1076 | 133 | 6157 |
| 1928 | 40 | 1628 | 74 | 2605 | 36 | 1441 | 32 | 1018 | 182 | 6692 |
| 1929 | 42 | 1773 | 99 | 2941 | 45 | 1599 | 32 | 979 | 218 | 7292 |
| 1930 | 44 | 1817 | 83 | 2511 | 60 | 1948 | 37 | 1079 | 224 | 7355 |
| 1931 | 47 | 1755 | 86 | 1955 | 86 | 2137 | 35 | 1185 | 254 | 7032 |
| 1932 | 77 | 2029 | 94 | 1905 | 85 | 1660 | 39 | 1032 | 295 | 6626 |
| 1933 | 67 | 1675 | 80 | 1513 | 88 | 1587 | 27 | 682 | 262 | 5457 |
| 1934 | 60 | 1349 | 57 | 1061 | 84 | 1319 | 27 | 646 | 228 | 4375 |
| 1935 | 54 | 1224 | 53 | 1095 | 57 | 1194 | 42 | 881 | 206 | 4394 |
| 1936 | 65 | 1439 | 58 | 964 | 50 | 1237 | 37 | 906 | 210 | 4546 |
| 1937 | 61 | 1417 | 121 | 2148 | 55 | 1255 | 44 | 1008 | 281 | 5828 |
| 1938 | 72 | 1643 | 124 | 1854 | 78 | 1392 | 76 | 1460 | 350 | 6349 |
| 1939 | 113 | 1769 | 123 | 1719 | 55 | 1239 | 58 | 958 | 349 | 5685 |
| 1940 | 83 | 1377 | 102 | 1752 | 60 | 1186 | 58 | 1026 | 303 | 5341 |
| 1941 | 82 | 1190 | 78 | 1440 | 64 | 1302 | 48 | 767 | 272 | 4699 |
| 1942 | 59 | 1010 | 53 | 1026 | 53 | 933 | 47 | 907 | 212 | 3876 |
| 1943 | 87 | 1812 | 96 | 1662 | 67 | 1340 | 61 | 1175 | 311 | 5989 |

other classes. In later years this differentiation was abandoned, and again temporarily reinstated. The figures given in Table XIII are inclusive of all types of class that appear to have given opportunity for some continuity of study. They do not include figures for isolated lectures. Owing to incompleteness of records available, figures for certain years have had to be arrived at by inference. The autonomy at one time granted to areas within the university districts has made the compilation of the table difficult; but totals for such areas have been included in the district totals. A further hazard arises from the fact that for certain years (e.g. 1930-5) some districts included in their returns many small correspondence groups and drama circles. Some discrimination has been used here. Accurate figures would probably have shown an even greater drop in the totals during the depression years than is indicated in the table. It should be obvious, then, that figures in the table (at least for years later than 1919) do *not* refer simply to 'tutorial classes' in any acceptable meaning of the term. Where it has appeared necessary to do so, corrections have been made in the published figures; in more than one instance, the Dominion totals do not agree with the recorded figures for the separate districts. Deductions on the basis of this table should, therefore, be made with caution.

The published figures for 1942 and 1943, which came to hand while this book was in the press, include for the Wellington district enrolments in 'Special Classes and Groups (Secondary Schools, Prisons, etc.)', amounting to 662 in 1942, and 265 in 1943. These figures, which were not included in the returns supplied to the author when the table was drawn up, and about the admissibility of which there has since appeared to be some difference of opinion, have not been included. Had these additions been made, the Wellington totals would have been increased to 1688 for 1942, and 1927 for the year 1943, while the Dominion totals would then have been 4538 and 6254 respectively. Deductions drawn either directly or indirectly from Table XIII and Table XIV would not be materially affected by this alteration.

III

DETAILED FIGURES OF STUDENT ENROLMENTS IN
VARIOUS TYPES OF WORK CONDUCTED BY THE
WEA, 1929-43

THE remarks made on pp. 362-3 apply also to the data on which Table XIV is based. For the purposes of this table:

(1) A *tutorial class* means a class conducted by a tutor for a minimum of twelve consecutive meetings, usually each of two hours' duration. The normal length of a full course is 18-22 meetings.

(2) A *short course* means a course of not more than eleven consecutive meetings conducted by a tutor.

(3) *Box Scheme groups* and *Discussion groups* meet under their own leaders for study of prepared material, and the number of meetings varies considerably. Discussion material may be supplied either to groups or to individuals.

The figures of Table XIV are represented in a diagram in the text (see Fig. III, p. 119).

IV

ADULT EDUCATION LEGISLATION

THE following extracts from Acts referring to adult education must, of course, be read in conjunction with the other clauses of the Acts. Only those clauses directly referring to adult education are quoted. References in brackets refer to amending Acts by which italicized words were added.

(1) *New Zealand University Amendment Act 1926*

21. (1) For the purposes of this section the expression 'Voluntary contribution' includes any devise, bequest, or gift of money, land,

929-1943

| YEAR | | | COURSES FOR STUDY, DISCUSSION, CORRESPONDENCE | | | | | | | | | | GRAND TOTALS | |
|-------------------|----|------|--|------|------------|------|------------|-----|-------|-----|-------|------|-----------------|------|
| | | | Auckland | | Wellington | | Canterbury | | Otago | | Total | | | |
| | C | St | C | St | C | St | C | St | C | St | C | St | C | St |
| 1929 | 18 | 1143 | 13 | 287 | 5 | 535 | 26 | 496 | 9 | 127 | 53 | 1445 | 168 | 7292 |
| 1930 | 15 | 1065 | — | — | 10 | g | — | — | 4 | 114 | 14 | 114 | 224 | 7355 |
| 1931 | 14 | 1080 | — | — | 27 | 288 | 13 | 170 | 1 | 49 | 41 | 507 | 256 | 7032 |
| 1932 | 10 | 812 | 26 | 438 | 31 | 372 | 25 | g | 1 | 30 | 83 | 840 | 295 | 6626 |
| 1933 | 10 | 762 | 21 | 341 | 21 | 253 | 28 | g | — | — | 70 | 594 | 262 | 5457 |
| 1934 | 9 | 636 | 8 | 114 | 18 | 207 | 28 | g | — | — | 54 | 321 | 228 | 4375 |
| 1935 | 9 | 526 | 21 | 329 | 15 | 170 | — | — | — | 5 | 36 | 504 | 206 | 4394 |
| 1936 | 13 | 704 | 31 | 398 | 20 | 200 | — | — | 4 | 71 | 55 | 669 | 210 | 4546 |
| 1937 | 9 | 528 | 39 | 652 | 64 | 826 | 8 | 85 | 9 | 98 | 120 | 1661 | 281 | 5828 |
| 1938 ^a | 10 | 628 | 44 | 618 | 77 | 851 | 29 | 303 | 25 | 363 | 175 | 2135 | 350 | 6349 |
| 1939 | 11 | 517 | 93 | 1095 | 86 | 957 | — | — | 32 | 342 | 211 | 2394 | 349 | 5685 |
| 1940 | 7 | 337 | 65 | 763 | 81 | 1032 | 40 | 564 | 37 | 449 | 223 | 2808 | 303 | 5341 |
| 1941 | 10 | 355 | 63 | 660 | 58 | 720 | 41 | 471 | 33 | 369 | 195 | 2220 | 272 | 4699 |
| 1942 | 12 | 425 | 47 | 585 | 26 | 306 | 34 | 340 | 27 | 447 | 134 | 1678 | 212 | 3876 |
| 1943 | 17 | 655 | 67 | 939 | 67 | 842 | 42 | 420 | 30 | 417 | 206 | 2618 | 311 | 5989 |

^e Includes an unspecified number of discussion courses.

^f Drama groups.

^g No returns.

or other property without consideration in money or money's worth.

(2) In respect of all voluntary contributions received by the Senate of the University or by the Council of any constituent college from any local authority or any person (not being an Education Board, or the governing body of a secondary school or a technical high school), and available for such purposes as may be defined by regulations, subsidies shall be payable out of *moneys appropriated by Parliament for the purpose* as follows (1932, No. 11, Sect. 4):

(b) A subsidy at the rate of one pound for every one pound of any voluntary contribution received exclusively *either for University Extension work* or for the purposes of the Workers' Educational Association: *provided that in respect of voluntary contributions made by local authorities, no greater sum than two hundred pounds shall be payable in any financial year to the Senate of the University or to any constituent college by way of subsidy hereunder.* (1928, Sect. 16 (b), and 1929, Sect. 5.)

(6) With the prior consent of the Minister of Education, any subsidy paid in respect of a voluntary contribution in aid of the Workers' Educational Association may be expended in whole or in part for the purpose of carrying out the objects of that Association. (Clause incomplete.)

(Note: It will be observed that subsidies are not payable automatically out of the general fund, but only out of 'moneys appropriated by Parliament for the purpose'. In point of fact such subsidies have not been paid for some years.)

(2) *Education Amendment Act 1938*

Council of Adult Education

7. (1) There is hereby established a Council of Adult Education (hereinafter referred to as the Council), which shall consist of—

(a) The Director of Education:

(b) The Director of Broadcasting:

(c) Two members to be appointed by the Senate of the University of New Zealand, of whom at least one shall not be a member of the Senate:

(d) One member to be appointed by the Dominion Council of the Workers' Educational Association:

(e) Two members to be appointed by the Minister.

(2) The appointed members of the [Council] shall be appointed for a term not exceeding three years, but unless they resign or otherwise vacate their offices they shall continue in office until the appointment of their successors in office. Any such member may be reappointed or may at any time resign his office by writing addressed to the Minister.

(3) The powers of the Council shall not be affected by any vacancy in the membership thereof.

(4) The Council shall from time to time elect one of its members to be the Chairman of the Council.

8. (1) Meetings of the Council shall be held at such times and places as the Chairman or the Council from time to time appoints.

(2) At any meeting of the Council four members shall form a quorum.

(3) The Chairman shall preside at all meetings at which he is present. In the absence of the Chairman from any meeting the members present shall select one of their number to be Chairman for the purposes of that meeting.

(4) At any meeting of the Council the Chairman shall have a deliberative vote, and in the case of an equality of votes shall have also a casting vote.

(5) All questions before the Council shall be decided by a majority of the valid votes recorded thereon.

(6) Subject to the provisions of the principal Act and of any regulations made under that Act, the Council shall regulate its own procedure and the procedure of any committees appointed by it in such manner as it thinks fit.

9. The Council may from time to time appoint such advisory committees as it thinks fit, and may appoint as members of any committee, or authorize any committee to co-opt as members thereof, persons who are not members of the Council.

10. It shall be the duty of the Council:

(a) To co-ordinate the activities of the organizations concerned with adult education, and generally to promote adult education:

(b) To make recommendations to the Minister as to the amount of the annual grant to be made to the University of New Zealand for adult education out of moneys appropriated by Parliament for that purpose:

(c) To control the expenditure of all moneys granted to the University of New Zealand for adult education as aforesaid:

(d) To furnish an annual report to the Minister.

11. (1) The University of New Zealand shall expend any moneys granted to it for adult education as aforesaid in accordance with the directions of the Council, and not otherwise.

(2) The Council may direct the University of New Zealand—

(a) To expend any such moneys for any specified purpose in relation to adult education, including the payment to the University of any amounts in respect of administrative expenses, and the payment to members of the Council, other than officers in the service of the Government, of such allowances and travelling expenses as may be approved by the Minister:

(b) To pay any such moneys to any specified body of persons, whether incorporated or not, either generally for the purposes of adult education or for any specified purpose in relation to adult education.

(3) In directing the expenditure of any such moneys the Council may, in its discretion, impose such conditions as it thinks fit for the purpose of ensuring that the moneys are expended only for the purposes specified and to the best advantage.

V

FINDINGS OF THE MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE, OCTOBER 1944

IN 1944 the Minister of Education called a conference of representatives of various bodies interested in five divisions of education: pre-school education, youth services, adult education, religion in education, and rural education. More than a hundred

delegates were present. Material prepared by nearly thirty organizations on the topic of adult education was circulated before the conference. At the conference itself, a committee was set up to bring down a draft report on the subject, and this, with some modifications, was adopted by the conference. For purposes of record the findings of the conference on adult education are given below. The full report of the conference was not available when the book went to press, but it is understood that a report will be issued in 1945.

1. That in view of the evident pressing need for expansion in the field of Adult Education, and the possible further demands that may occur with the cessation of hostilities, the Government be recommended to make this year a substantial increase in the grant distributed through the Council of Adult Education, and that there be adopted a policy of progressive increases in subsequent years.

2. That the Hon. Minister of Education be asked to request the Council of Adult Education to set up a Consultative Committee to institute a survey of the present cultural and educational facilities available for adults and to make whatever recommendations it may deem necessary.

3. That the greatest possible degree of local autonomy should be allowed to adult educational agencies.

4. That this Conference stress the importance at all stages of education of an adequately stocked and staffed free library service.

5. That the Conference recommend the Hon. the Minister of Education and the Government to extend such supply services as are now nationally available, and to build up a Film Library, a Library of Gramophone Records, an Information Service of facilities available, and such other supply services as may be beyond the resources of local committees.

6. That the Conference support the principle that Adult Education be extended into the vocational field where no other existing public organizations are available to satisfy the need, and recommend:

- (a) That the suggested Consultative Committee be requested to devise the most suitable machinery to provide for this extension;
- and (b) That, if necessary, the Manual and Technical Regu-

lations be amended so as to provide for extension of the work of Technical Schools to outlying districts.

7. That this Conference favour the establishment of further Community Centres, but believes—

(a) That such Centres should normally develop in close association with adult as well as other educational services; and

(b) That any policy of Government subsidy should be confined to Centres which met certain minimum requirements in this respect.

8. That the Consultative Committee, in considering Community Centres, keep in touch with any investigation into Youth Centres.

9. That the Council of Adult Education be asked to appoint without delay a committee to consider the scope and planning of Community Centres for different types of communities, and to prepare a suitable brochure.

10. That the Conference favour the establishment of Adult Education Centres in the four district centres.

11. That the needs of the Maori people be included in the survey of Adult Education to be made by the Consultative Committee.

12. That this Conference, having in mind its great debt to members of the Armed Forces, and realizing that their service has interfered with their normal education, recommends the Government to afford every facility, including any reasonable concessions, to these men and women to obtain such further education as they may require; and more particularly in cases where, as a result of their service, they have been so disabled as to render it necessary for them to prepare for a new vocation.

Two recommendations of the conference concerning Rural Education have a bearing on adult education:

8. The Conference recommends that in some suitable centre where there is a district high school properly equipped and staffed as a place giving full educational opportunity, it should also serve as a Community Centre.

9. The Conference recommends that as an experiment, in a truly rural district, there should be set up a completely equipped and properly designed Community Centre.

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